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# ERRORS OF CAMPBELLISM.

BEING

## A REVIEW

OF ALL THE

FUNDAMENTAL ERRORS OF THE SYSTEM OF FAITH  
AND CHURCH POLITY OF THE DENOMINATION  
FOUNDED BY ALEXANDER CAMPBELL.

BY

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# ERRORS OF CAMPBELLISM.

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## CHAPTER I.

### THE FOUNDERS OF CAMPBELLISM.

IN entering upon the investigation of that system of religious doctrine or faith called Campbellism, it is proper and right that we give a brief sketch of its founder, or, more properly, founders; for it was the evolution not of one mind alone, but of two—those of father and son, Thomas Campbell and Alexander Campbell. The doctrinal system of this so-called reformation is the sole product of these two men, inasmuch that since their day it has rigidly adhered to the principles taught by these men; and in no material respect, and in scarcely any minor points also, is there the slightest particle of difference between the representative teachers of to-day and the great expounders of its creed at first.

It may be said, without fear of successful denial, that Alexander Campbell has impressed his doctrinal ideas, and even the methods of elucidating and enforcing them, upon his followers as no other great religious leader in modern times has done. He is a

very forceful illustration of the power possessed by a man of commanding genius and force of character over his fellow-men. Creeds of other Christian denominations have usually been the productions of many minds, and the result of the deliberations of councils of learned men. But not so Campbellism; it is the work of one, or, at most, of two minds.

The assumed rejection of all human creeds gave the Campbells a peculiarly favorable opportunity to impress their doctrinal ideas upon those to whom they were addressed, as the very essence of Bible teaching. The marvel is, that the astute founder of the system and his more intelligent followers have deceived themselves with the belief that their doctrine is anything more than another human creed, though not presented to the world in articles of religion or definite formulas of doctrine—a creed as really commanding assent of every one who seeks to ally himself with them, as any creed in the broad domain of Christendom.

Alexander Campbell, the man who more especially, by his force of character, executive ability, and firm faith in his own convictions, was the founder of the system under consideration, was the eldest son of Thomas Campbell, and was born in County Antrim, Ireland, September 12, 1788.

Thomas Campbell became, in early life, a preacher in the Presbyterian Church of Ireland, and while in the old country was engaged in either preaching or teaching. In 1807 he emigrated to America, leaving

his family still in Ireland, to follow him subsequently to his new home, when once he had provided for them. In 1808, however, his family, under the conduct of Alexander, embarked for America, but were shipwrecked on the coast of Scotland, which caused them to tarry in that country for awhile, until, under auspices more favorable, they might essay to start again for their new home. While in Scotland, he was brought into contact with many leading minds in Scottish religious circles, and enjoyed the opportunity of about one year's tuition in the University of Glasgow. In September, 1809, they safely reached New York, and shortly after joined their father in Western Pennsylvania.

Thomas Campbell, on his arrival in America, identified himself with the Seceder Synod and Presbytery of Chartres, in Western Pennsylvania, which his son Alexander likewise did upon his arrival. In a short time after his uniting with this Presbytery, Thomas Campbell was arraigned for a violation of the usages of the Church with regard to the Lord's Supper, and was condemned, whereupon he appealed unto the Synod, and was released from condemnation, because of informalities in the proceedings; but the matter was at the same time referred to a committee, which reported, censuring him. This caused him to withdraw from the Seceders, and in 1809 he and other disaffected parties organized "The Christian Association of Washington," in Western Pennsylvania. The purpose of this soci-

ety, from its "Declaration" of principles formulated and published, seems to have been an effort to fraternize Christians of divergent views upon the fundamental truths of the Christian Scriptures, and was certainly a commendable undertaking. The fourth article of the Declaration especially disclaims the purpose of creating a new Church organization. It is one of the marvels of human inconsistency that an institution that had its origin in a protest against party spirit and dogmatism in the Church, should culminate in one of the most imperiously dogmatic of the religious organizations of modern times, and at the same time foster a spirit of controversy that is most unqualifiedly condemned in the preamble of the "Declaration."

Alexander Campbell began preaching in 1810. He does not seem at first to have received any special authorization from any society, Church, or association.

About this time Thomas Campbell made a proposition to unite with the Synod of Pittsburg of the Regular Presbyterian Church, but was refused. Among the reasons assigned was this, that Alexander Campbell "had been allowed to exercise his gifts of public speaking without any regular ordination." This refusal resulted in the foundation of the "Christian Association of Brush Run," on the 4th of May, 1811. After the organization of this small denomination, for such it was, Alexander Campbell was, by its

first council, session, or whatever it may be styled, licensed to preach.

On the 12th day of June, 1812, he was baptized by immersion, by Elder Luce, of the Baptist Church, after having made, as he supposed, the proper confession, namely: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." And it was about this time he began to regard faith as simply "the belief of the Scriptures on the testimony of the apostles."

In the fall of 1813, Alexander Campbell and the Brush Run organization formed a union with the Red-Stone Association of the Baptist Church. In August, 1823, he withdrew from this Baptist Association, in order to escape arraignment and trial by it, and expulsion therefrom for heresy. It was in the fall of this same year that he had his discussion, in the State of Kentucky, with Mr. McCalla, in which he, according to his own statement,\* first fully and maturely espoused his distinguishing tenet of baptism as a necessary condition in order to the pardon of sin.

It may be said that the system, as a new doctrinal adventure, was now successfully launched upon the arena of conflict with all other sister denominations; and that which had its birth professedly as a protest against ecclesiastical domination, dissension, and dogmatism, came into existence as a very theological Ishmael, its hand against all others.

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\* "Christian System," p. 180.



Mr. Campbell began, in the spring of 1823, the publication of a periodical, which he entitled *The Christian Baptist*, which, however, ultimately gave place to *The Millennial Harbinger*. These papers were the exponents of his new theories; and in Kentucky, Western Pennsylvania, South-eastern Ohio, and Western Virginia, the new Church grew quite rapidly, by accessions from the Baptist Church and the Christian Church, so-called, embracing many of the followers of James O'Kelly, and that branch of Arian Baptists usually called "New Lights."

Alexander Campbell was a kind of theological gladiator. He rejoiced in a theological discussion as a means of disseminating his peculiar views. And at first he was quite successful, inasmuch as his opponents were not well enough acquainted with his system, and the course adopted in its maintenance, to combat it successfully. They struck in the dark, while he was able, through the published polemical theology and formularies of his opponents, to know just where and how to make his assaults. His enthusiastic followers boast much of his prowess in this direction, and affect to believe that he was victor in every contest; but his debate with Professor N. L. Rice, of the Presbyterian Church, held in Lexington, Kentucky, was anything but a victory for this new system. In this long discussion, which was fully published, Campbellism, in its distinctive tenets and methods of defense, was entirely brought to light, so that future defenders of



evangelical truth were advised as to just what they were called upon to meet.

The founder of this system of faith, in his work entitled "The Christian System," has given to the world his doctrinal views, as well as the polity of his Church. We shall have occasion to make frequent reference to this work, which presents the system completely as devised, elucidated, and promulgated by its author. And every careful reader of the work will observe, by comparison with the present polity and doctrinal teachings of its societies, as represented by the leading preachers of the denomination, that "The Christian System" is a full and complete disciplinary and doctrinal guide for the people of this faith, as much so as any discipline or confession of faith of any sister Church, although it has not been formally adopted by the Church at large as such; for, according to the teaching of its founder, each particular society is independent of all others. (See "Christian System," p. 73, sec. 4.)\* And therefore it is always possible for

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\*"Still, all these particular congregations of the Lord, whether at Rome, Corinth, or Ephesus, though equally independent of one another as to the management of their own peculiar affairs, are, by virtue of one common Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one common salvation, but one kingdom or Church of God, and, as such, are under obligations to co-operate with one another in all measures promotive of the great ends of Christ's death and resurrection."

The edition of "The Christian System" from which the author quotes, is the fourth edition, published at Cincinnati. The definition of Church polity begins with p. 72.

them to deny the existence among them of any authoritative discipline, such as Churches that have a central or connectional form of government have. But it nevertheless is true that there is no society among them that is not governed by the disciplinary rules laid down by Mr. Campbell in "The Christian System."

It will also be seen, by the discriminating reader of his chapters on "Church Order" and "Christian Discipline," that he expects the doctrines he inculcates to form the bond of union among Churches. It is therefore a very natural evolution of faith in his followers to hold that their interpretations of the Scriptures are infallibly correct, since they have so eminent an example set for them in their great leader.

A system that arraigns all Christendom as profoundly and fundamentally wrong, must, in the very nature of the case, predicate a great deal upon the assumed correctness of its interpretations of Scripture. And these must be met by an appeal to the truth and reason. No flattering unction, that error, left to itself will perish, will meet this case. It is a large, vigorous, healthy system of religious formalism, that makes no hesitation in assaulting other denominations. And if spiritual Christianity would maintain its own, it must not take refuge in that coward's plea of, Let error alone and preach the truth. The truth is oftentimes most successfully preached by showing where the pitfalls of error are.

## CHAPTER II.

## THE CENTRAL IDEA OF CAMPBELLISM.

THE key-note of this system of faith is the doctrine of baptism by water as a necessary condition to the remission of sins. This doctrine Alexander Campbell specifically states in the following language: \* "The apostle Peter, when first publishing the gospel for the Jews, taught them that they were not forgiven their sins by faith, but by an act of faith, by a believing immersion into the Lord Jesus." His followers, in their discussions with representatives of other confessions of faith, usually affirm it in the following language: "Christian baptism is a necessary condition in order to the remission of the past sins of the penitent believer." The writer has had several joint discussions with different representative men among them, and this was, in all material respects, their method of stating this fundamental doctrine of their creed. By Christian baptism they mean dipping in water in the name of Christ, or what they are pleased to call immersion. By "condition" they mean the personal act of the free moral agent, by which he accepts of the salvation provided him in

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\* "Christian System," p. 194.

Christ. By "necessary" is meant that without which no one can be saved, whatever else he may have or may not have. Remission of sins they regard as the same as pardon, justification, reconciliation, adoption, washing away of sin,\* and the like. By "past sins" they mean the sins committed before baptism. In their dialect the unbaptized is an "alien," and as such has not the right of prayer or petition. In this phrase "past sins" they think they avoid the force of the argument that, if baptism is a condition to pardon, it ought to be repeated at every recovery from backsliding. This fanciful distinction of sinners into aliens and rebellious members of Christ's kingdom, is a sheer invention, to counteract the doctrinal embarrassments they are thrown into by the system. By penitent believer they mean the believer who, after believing, is penitent. Faith must precede repentance, and with them is simply the belief of testimony. "No testimony, no faith; for faith is only the belief of testimony." †

This doctrine, thus briefly defined, is the key-stone to the whole doctrinal superstructure of Campbellism. It is to this all the system has been conformed; their views of faith and prayer, the operation of the Holy Ghost, the gifts of the Spirit, the witness of the Spirit, assurance, reconciliation, inherited depravity, even Church polity,—all are interpreted in the light of this idea. For example, if the immediate office of the

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\* "Christian System," p. 187. † *Id.* p. 113.

Holy Ghost in conviction and conversion were accepted as it is by other evangelical Christians, and if the Spirit's direct witness to conversion were allowed, they could not well, in the face of the positive testimony of those who had received the assurance of pardon without baptism, explain how such could take place without the previous fulfillment of this assumed "necessary condition ;" hence they must deny the immediate operation of the Spirit, and hold that the witness of the Spirit, as claimed by others, is a delusion. Because of this logical necessity their ministry generally are unsparing in their ridicule of the idea of the direct witness of the Spirit. In this, however, they do not exhibit the moderation and good taste of Mr. Campbell, for it is difficult to make out clearly his views on this matter from his writings. At one time he seems to deny the doctrine, at another to admit it.

But one thing is certain, he denied the immediate operation of the Spirit upon the heart of the sinner in conviction and conversion ; but how the Holy Ghost can impress the heart of a child of God so as to give help, strength, joy,\* and not be a direct witness to his salvation, is something difficult to understand. For, most evidently, if the child of God receives the Holy Spirit as a "helper," "comforter," "sanetifier," giving "love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness,

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\* "Christian System," pp. 64, 65.



goodness, fidelity, meekness, temperance," as Campbell seems to teach,\* he must be able to recognize this as a fact in his experience, and therefore be able to testify to it. But in this we have simply the illustration that his followers are very much more ultra Campbellites than the founder of the system; for the only "joy, peace, goodness," etc., they will admit of is entirely subjective, or such as the mind obtains through its own beliefs and convictions. For example, the advocate of this doctrine believes that he must first believe the Bible; secondly, repent of his sins; thirdly, confess that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and be baptized on this confession. This having done, his conscience approves him in it, because he has done what he believes to be right; and now, upon this purely subjective conviction, he believes himself to be in the kingdom of God and an heir of heaven; this furnishes him a degree of rest, satisfaction, or peace. It is altogether in the mind, and every proposition may be false upon which it is founded, and yet the same confidence exist. The devotee of Islam or papistic absurdities may have, and often does have, the same.

If there is no immediate witness of the Holy Spirit,

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\* *Christian System*," p. 66. See also pp. 354-356, Vol. II, "*Richardson's Memoirs of A. Campbell*." His biographer here proves that Mr. Campbell accepted the belief that "those who are sons of God receive the Holy Spirit promised through faith." See Appendix A.

then his assurance of pardon is altogether subjective, and to be sure of it he must postulate his infallibility in interpreting the Scriptures. Hence there can be but little marvel that the advocate of this faith is sure he is right and all others wrong; for his conviction that he is a child of God depends upon the certainty that he is not mistaken in his interpretation. But this will be treated of in all its bearings when we come to deal with the errors of this system, relative to the offices of the Spirit. We have called attention thus fully to this, at this juncture, that the reader may see how relatively all-important is this central idea, and, in the discussion of it, realize that it does not stand or fall for itself alone, but for a whole system of belief that is built up around it.

The doctrine of baptism as a condition to the remission of sin is papistic, in fact. While they disclaim this, and are very bitter in denunciation of those who so charge them, yet it is impossible to minds not under the bonds of the system to distinguish the difference. They and the papists quote the same passages of Scripture, and, allowing for the difference in ecclesiastical systems, put the same construction upon them. As, for example, Matt. xvi, 18: "Thou art Peter, and upon this rock will I build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it!" This is used by them to show that the Church was not founded until the day of Pentecost; that Peter opened the door to it by his sermon on that occasion in the supposed



announcement of the condition of baptism for the remission of sins. And in reference to the confession that Peter made, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God," which called forth the Savior's remark, it is assumed that this confession is the "rock" upon which Christ proposed to establish his Church. Hence they require it of all candidates for baptism.

Along with this passage from the Gospel of Matthew, they usually join one from John xx, 23: "Whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained!" This, they claim, is the commission as given by John, and that the disciples were to remit sins by baptism. When pressed to define this latter passage, they usually define it as the conferring power to remit sins by baptism, which evidently makes a perpetual priesthood out of the ministry, and confers upon them marvelous powers. Compare the following canons of the Church of Rome with A. Campbell's claims for the administrator in the rite of baptism (Council of Trent, Seventh Session:)

Canon IV: "If any one saith that the sacraments of the New Law are not necessary unto salvation, but superfluous, and that without them, or without a desire thereof, men obtain of God, through faith alone, the grace of justification—though all the sacraments are not indeed necessary for every individual—let him be anathema."

Canon VI: "If any one saith that the sacraments

of the New Law do not contain the grace which they signify, or that they do not confer the grace on those who do not place an obstacle thereunto, as though they were merely outward signs of grace or justice received through faith, and certain marks of Christian profession, whereby believers are distinguished amongst men from unbelievers, let him be anathema."

Canon VIII: "If any one saith that, by the said sacraments of the New Law, grace is not conferred through the act performed (*ex opere operato*), but that faith alone in the divine promises suffices for obtaining the grace, let him be anathema."

On page 128 of the Catechism of the Council of Trent we have the following: "The remission of all sin, original and actual, is therefore the peculiar effect of baptism. That this was the object of its institution by the Lord and Savior, is a truth clearly deduced from the testimony of St. Peter, to say nothing of the array of evidence that might be adduced from other sources. 'Do penance,' says he, 'and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins.'"

Further on we read: "But in baptism not only is sin forgiven, but with it all the punishment due to sin is remitted by a merciful God;" and "Baptism remits all punishment due to original sin in the next life."

On page 123 we have the following: "If, then, through the transgression of Adam, children inherit

the stains of primeval guilt, is there not stronger reason to conclude that the efficacious merits of Christ the Lord must impart to them that justice and those graces which will give them a title to reign in life eternal? This happy consummation baptism alone can accomplish. The pastor, therefore, will inculcate the absolute necessity of administering baptism to infants." \*

Beside this place the following from A. Campbell (Christian System, pages 194 and 195), and it could be duplicated from most any of their authors. Campbell says: "The apostle Peter, when first publishing the gospel to the Jews, taught them that they were not forgiven their sins by faith, but by an act of faith, by a believing immersion into the Lord Jesus. That this may appear evident to all, we shall examine his Pentecostian address and his Pentecostian hearers."

"Peter, now *holding the keys* of the kingdom of Jesus, and speaking under the commission for converting the world, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus, . . . may be expected to speak the truth, the whole truth, plainly and intelligibly to his brethren, the Jews. He had that day declared the gospel facts, and proven the resurrection and ascension of Jesus to the conviction of thousands. They believed and repented. . . . Being full of this faith, they inquired of Peter and other apostles *what they*

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\* NOTE.—The writer is indebted to Dr. G. W. Hughey's work on "Baptismal Remission" for this compilation.

ought to do to obtain remission of sins. They were informed that, though they now believed and repented, they were not pardoned, but must '*reform and be immersed for the remission of sins.*' . . . This act of faith was presented as that act by which a change in their state could be effected; or, in other words, by which alone they could be pardoned." Again, page 197, he says: "All these testimonies concur with each other in presenting the act of faith—Christian immersion frequently called *conversion*—as that act inseparably connected with the remission of sins." Again, page 208: "Remission of sins, or coming into a state of acceptance, being one of the present immunities of the kingdom of heaven, can not be Scripturally enjoyed by any person before immersion."

These quotations we might multiply to weariness, were it necessary. But wherein consists the difference between the averments of Mr. Campbell and the canons of Rome? Both affirm that baptism is necessary to the pardon of sin. Both lay stress on the "*act performed,*" only Rome is the more liberal of the two. With Rome a little water will do, but Campbellism demands enough for an immersion, and an immersion at whatever cost. Both claim that St. Peter received the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and both claim that Peter's successors use these keys in admitting persons into this kingdom. There is some little difference between them as to just who are the

successors of St. Peter, but this difference is not fundamental. They agree in the fundamentals.

It will be seen also, by the parallels above given, that this doctrine is but a slight modification of the old doctrine of baptismal regeneration. It is true that this charge is resented with considerable vehemence by the advocates of this doctrine, yet, as in the case before given, it is very difficult to make a distinction. The two parties use the same passages in identically the same way. Dr. Pusey, of the Anglican High Church party, may be regarded as very good authority as to the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. In "Holy Baptism," page 48, he comments on Titus iii, 5: "'The washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost,' *i. e.*, a baptizing accompanied by or conveying a reproduction, a second birth, a restoration of our decayed nature by the new and first life, imparted by the Holy Ghost. The apostle has been directed both to limit the imparting of the inward grace by the mention of the outward washing, and to raise our conceptions of the greatness of this second birth by the addition of the spiritual grace. The gift, moreover, is the gift of God in and by baptism: every thing but God's mercy is excluded—'not by works of righteousness which we have done'—they only who believe will come to the 'washing of regeneration;' yet not belief alone, but God, 'according to his mercy, saves them by the washing of regeneration;' by faith are we saved, not by works; and by baptism we are

through a washing of regeneration and of general of the Holy Spirit



saved, not by faith only, for so God hath said; not the necessity of preparation, but its efficiency in itself is excluded; baptism comes neither as 'grace of congruity,' nor as an outward seal of benefits before conveyed; we are saved neither by faith only, nor by baptism only, but faith bringing us to baptism, and by baptism God saves us."

Put beside this some utterances of Campbell: \* "Wherever water, faith, and the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are, there will be found the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. Yes, as God first gave the efficacy of water to blood, he has now given the efficacy of blood to water. This, as was said, is figurative; but it is not a figure which misleads, for the meaning is given without a figure, viz., immersion for the remission of sins. And to him that made the washing of clay from the eyes the washing away of blindness, it is competent to make the immersion of the body in water efficacious to the washing away of sin *from the conscience*." Again: † "Being born of water in the Savior's style, and the bath of regeneration in the apostle's style, in the judgment of all writers and critics of eminence, refer to one and the same act, viz., Christian baptism. Hence it came to pass that *all the ancients* used the word regeneration as *synonymous with immersion*." Similar quotations might be produced in numbers, showing that the difference

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\* "Christian System," p. 215. † *Id.*

between the advocates of baptismal regeneration and those of baptismal remission is more a difference of words than of real principles. Campbell and his followers quote without hesitation the writings of the advocates of baptismal regeneration as supporting their view, yet when charged with advocating baptismal regeneration they become very indignant, and accuse "the sects," as they style other Christian denominations, of traducing them. A. Campbell, in a foot-note on page 272 of the "Christian System," attempts to meet the charge and explain the difference. The explanation amounts to this: The advocates of baptismal regeneration contend for a regeneration effected by baptism alone, while Campbell contends that baptism is but the last step in the process. The so-called difference upon which this explanation is grounded does not exist in fact. In the case of adults the advocates of baptismal regeneration require, as antecedent conditions, faith and repentance; also, belief in the presence of the Holy Spirit, imparted in the act of baptism. In the case of infants, the difference may exist; but the doctrine does not by any means apply to infants alone.

This doctrine also teaches justification by works. This is also disavowed by them, but with no better reason than the two former. Baptism they are always ready to set forth as a *command*, and the observance of it as *obedience*; and when their theory of doctrine is met by the repeated declaration of the apostle Paul—



viz., that justification is by faith “without works,” and “without the deeds of the law”—they are ever ready to quote St. James to the contrary, leaving a positive conflict between these apostles, when a reasonable method of interpretation would show complete agreement.

A. Campbell, in treating of the justification of sinners, says: \* “As an act of favor it is done by the blood of Jesus, as the rightful and efficient cause; by the faith as the instrumental cause; by the name of Jesus the Lord as the immediate cause; and by works as the demonstrative and conclusive cause.” In what sense this jargon of supposed distinctions explains the justification of the sinner, it is difficult for any one not looking at the Scriptures through a theory to understand. The question still remains for explanation, How is the sinner justified by works of righteousness, and not by works of righteousness, at one and the same time? Until this question is answered, the charge of teaching a doctrine of justification by works must stand unimpeached.

It is at once apparent to the student of Church history that this scheme of doctrine is in square antagonism, in this respect, to the fundamental doctrine of the Reformation, and in harmony with Rome on the ground of justification. The watch-cry of the Reformation was, *Sola fides justificat*—faith alone justifies;

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\* “Christian System,” p. 183.

while Rome shouted back, not *faith alone*, but works also. Hagenbach (History of Doctrines, Vol. II, page 281) says : “Both Roman Catholics and Protestants ascribe to faith a justifying power in the case of the sinner ; but there was this great difference between them, that the former maintained that, in addition to faith, good works are a necessary condition of salvation, and ascribe to them a certain degree of meritoriousness ; while the latter adhere rigidly to the proposition, ‘ *Sola fides justificat.* ’ ” If this eminent German ecclesiastical historian had sought to define the doctrinal conflict between Campbellism and other evangelical denominations, he could not have found better words to distinguish them than the words given above. Campbellism always defines baptism as a necessary condition to the salvation of the sinner, and they class it with the “works” spoken of by St. James ii, 24. It is throughout a system of salvation by works and nothing else ; and while they do not ascribe to works meritoriousness, yet they make them essential antecedently to justification. And if they are “good works,” merit can not be denied to them any more before than after justification. God ascribes merit to all good works ; but good works are wrought in faith, and faith justifies ; good works, therefore, belong to a justified state, and not antecedently to it.

## CHAPTER III.

## THE DIALECT OF CAMPBELLISM.

THIS system has a doctrinal dialect peculiarly its own, and by which it may be readily recognized anywhere. This dialect is made up of Scripture phraseology, used in a certain dogmatic sense, which distinctively indexes the characteristic interpretation of this school in dealing with certain passages of Scripture. This its author calls "purity of speech," "speaking of Bible things by Bible words."\* But it is plain to the unsophisticated that this Bible terminology is given a meaning different from that attached to it by others. Bible terms may be used in a certain arbitrary sense that is not legitimately to be attached to them, and thereby be made to propagate error of the most destructive consequences and character.

In this Scriptural phraseology, used in this peculiar sense, we have another forceful illustration of the unbounded influence of this man Campbell; for the dialect is his own style of speech beyond all question. We doubt it possible in the history of the entire Church of the Christian centuries to parallel this with another example exactly similar. And yet his following affect to believe that they, in their system, are

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\* "Christian System," p. 125.

independent of all human leadership. Their creed is the Bible, and their doctrines are infallible deductions from the Scriptures. This must be so, else their claim to take the Scriptures as their sole guide falls to the ground, and they only take their interpretation of the Scriptures, which is just what all other Christians do, and no more.

Let us consider some of this characteristic terminology. For example, "reign of heaven," as a translation of the phrase "kingdom of heaven," first proposed by Mr. Campbell, is now with great unanimity used by the doctrinal teachers of this system. Under this form of translation they usually follow Mr. Campbell's discussion of it, under the heads of "Name," "Constitution," "King," "Subjects," "Laws," "Territory." An entirely fanciful treatment, made use of to make it co-ordinate with a preconceived system of doctrine. But of this more subsequently.

According to this dialect the unbaptized are styled "aliens," while the baptized, by parity of reasoning, however backslidden, however besotted in sin, are naturalized citizens, and may be saved by repentance, faith, and prayer, at any time, while the "alien" can not be saved without baptism. The Scriptures do use the term "aliens," but never to signify the unbaptized. In Eph. ii, 12, and iv, 18, the term undoubtedly refers to the Gentiles in their condition anterior to the publication of the gospel, and as compared with

Israel under the Levitical dispensation. One thing, however, is certain. The Scriptures nowhere recognize the unbaptized person as an alien simply because he is unbaptized.

"In Christ," is another Scriptural phrase that is given in this system a peculiar signification. A. Campbell says:\* "*When are persons in Christ?* I choose this phrase in accommodation to the familiar style of this day. No person is *in* a house, or *in* a ship, or *in* a state, or *in* a kingdom, but he that is gone, or is introduced *into* a state, *into* a kingdom; so no person is *in* Christ but he who has been introduced *into* Christ. . . . But the phrase, into Christ, is always connected with conversion, regeneration, immersion, or putting on Christ. Before we are justified in Christ, live in Christ, or fall asleep in Christ, we must come, be introduced or immersed into Christ." What can teach more explicitly than this that baptism is that which puts the sinner *into* Christ, and that the baptized state is the state of being "in Christ?" An interpretation that contains a whole brood of destructive fallacies.

If baptism puts the sinner into Christ, then all who are baptized are *in* Christ, whatever may be their present morals. If immorality will put the baptized person out of Christ, then this whole theory falls to the ground. If it does not, then the backslider is sure

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\* "Christian System," pp. 188-189.

of final salvation; for, according to Rom. viii, 38, 39, "Nothing can separate us from the love of God, which is *in* Christ Jesus our Lord;" and 2 Cor. v, 17: "If any man be *in* Christ, he is a new creature." It does not help the matter at all to say, "We require sincere repentance and faith in order to baptism;" for these qualities may have existed, and the individual be *now* "in the gall of bitterness and bond of iniquity." He is either in Christ or out of Christ. If in Christ, he is safe; if out of Christ, how does he now get *into* Christ? By baptism? If so, then constant re-baptism will be required. If not now by baptism, then baptism does not put all sinners into Christ. To this absurdity does this misapplication of the Scriptures inevitably lead. The whole theory is fallacious. Water baptism is not baptism *into* Christ, but baptism *into the name of Christ*; that is, into a profession of his name for the remission of sins. Baptism *into* Christ is entirely spiritual, and does not result in this congeries of absurdities.

"Obedience of faith," and "obeying the gospel," are choice phrases in the dialect of this system. They mean, as used by them, but one thing, namely, baptism. As, in the golden age of the Roman empire, all roads were said to lead to Rome, so, according to these teachers, all routes of Scripture exegesis inevitably lead to baptism. And yet there is not one single passage that either directly or inferentially refers to baptism as "the obedience of faith," or "obeying



the gospel." This is a very pertinent illustration of the persistency of preconceived opinions in causing individuals to see the Scriptures through the medium of a theory. The obedience of faith is faith itself; or, in other words, faith is obedience to the command to believe *in, on, or upon* Christ. In Rom. x, 16, we have "obeying the gospel" defined: "But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Esaias saith, Lord, who hath believed our report?" In what respect did they not "obey the gospel?" Plainly in not believing the "report" of the prophets. "Obedience to the faith," in Rom. i, 5, is obedience to the whole system of faith. Yet despite these plain and obvious interpretations of these phrases, they have become a veritable doctrinal shibboleth of the followers of Campbell, and they invite sinners to believe, repent, and confess Christ, and obey the gospel.

The word "confession" has also a peculiar significance attached to it in this dialect. With them it means the oral confession that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Alexander Campbell says:\* "The only apostolic and divine confession of faith which God the Father of all the Church, and that upon which Jesus himself said he would build it, is the sublime and supreme proposition, *That Jesus of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Son of the living God.* This is the peculiarity of the Christian system, its specific

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\* "Christian System," p. 58.

attribute." This, then, is confession, according to their teaching, and is one of the requisites of baptism, and one of the works of righteousness. That such an oral confession was ever required by the apostles as a prerequisite to baptism, has not one particle of proof in the Acts of the Apostles or their Epistles. The only passage they will attempt to cite is Acts viii, 37, which is rejected as wanting in genuineness by the Revised Version. Critical scholars have for a long time with perfect unanimity held its spuriousness, an addition that crept into some manuscripts from an ecclesiastical formula.

The words *ὁμολογέω* and *ὁμολογία* are rendered indifferently *confess*, *profess*, *confession*, *profession*, and refer to faith or belief in almost every instance, without any formulated statement or oral declaration. Confession "with the mouth" is only spoken of in Rom. x, 9, 10, and it requires an unlimited stretch of the imagination to put into the words, as here used, the formal confession that Mr. Campbell and his following require.

Again, "the action of baptism" is a prominent technic in this dialect. Mr. Campbell, in "The Christian System," devotes a chapter to this subject. By this word "action," it is sought to maintain the position that the word in the original defines a specific action, rather than a result to be brought about by different acts or influences. What is the "action of baptism" as defined by their mode of procedure? Whose action is it? It is evidently the action of the administrator after the immersion is partially secured

by the action of the subject. At this juncture the individual, passive in the hands of the administrator, is actively *dipped* by him, or *immersed* and *emersed* by him. The object is not by this description to burlesque their mode of procedure in immersion, so-called, but to bring out clearly to logical discrimination this "action" idea. Baptism is the passive receiving of water, administered in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as a Christian rite; and the active party, so far as physical action is concerned, is the administrator. And when Mr. Campbell talks of baptism as "an action commanded to be done,"\* he talks of a command that never was given. The command to baptize was only given to apostles and administrators—the "action" was to be their action. The subjects of baptism were commanded to *be baptized*—i. e., receive baptism—and this whole theory of "action," and talk about the "action of baptism," is a pertinent illustration of that want of "purity of speech" that Campbell so unsparingly condemns in others.

With the same limited meaning the term "gospel" is used. With them it means, preaching baptism in order to the remission of sins. Whatever of repentance, faith, love, or duty a sermon may have in it, if it have not baptism as a condition to pardon, it is not the gospel.† In this case it is true, as in the case of "obedience" before spoken of, that there is not a

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\* "Christian System," p. 55.

† See "Memoirs of A. Campbell," pp. 208-218, 224, 229.

single passage that refers to baptism by water as any part of the gospel. The fact is, the gospel was preached during Christ's stay here upon the earth, and that was before the institution of Christian baptism according to Mr. Campbell. Again, the gospel was preached unto Abraham, Gal. iii, 8: "And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the heathen through faith, preached before the gospel unto Abraham, saying, In thee shall all nations be blessed." So also was it preached in the wilderness, Heb. iv, 2: "For unto us was the gospel preached as well as unto them." Certainly, in this gospel as well as in that preached by Christ unto "the poor" (Luke vii, 22), there was no water baptism as a condition to its benefits. Again, Paul especially disclaims baptism as a part of the gospel of remission, 1 Cor. i, 17: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." What is here set by antithesis to the gospel? Water baptism. It is, therefore, no part of the gospel of salvation to sinners. It belongs to those who are saved, as a symbol of the grace whereby they were saved; to wit, spiritual baptism, which is a fundamental part of the gospel of Christ, for it is purification from sin. 1 Cor. xii, 13: "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free, and have all been made to drink into one spirit."

"The loaf in the house of the Lord" is a somewhat unique and original method of presenting the

communion of the Lord's Supper. This idea of "one loaf" \* is founded on a fanciful rendering of the Greek *ἄρτος*, in 1 Cor. x, 16, 17—a word which, in the great majority of instances, is translated *bread*. But Mr. Campbell conceived that, at the ancient or primitive communion occasions, each member broke a piece from the common "loaf." So he translates *ἄρτος* "loaf" to accord with this idea. Justin Martyr, in his first Apology (ch. 67, A. D. 140) gives an account of the Christian assemblies, in which he says of the elements of the Eucharist: "There is a distribution to each." Of course, this is a matter of but minor moment; but it serves to point the illustration of Campbell's doctrinal dialect, and the unparalleled authority his opinions held, and do now hold, over his followers.

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\* "Christian System," pp. 303-331.

## CHAPTER IV.

## THE THEORY OF POSITIVE INSTITUTES.

ALEXANDER CAMPBELL and his followers, in order to make their scheme of doctrine co-ordinate with unity of purpose and plan in the divine economy under all dispensations and in all ages, have promulgated the theory of salvation by obedience to positive institutes or precepts. The theory in brief is this: Under each dispensation God enjoined some positive act of obedience as the final condition upon which remission of sin was procured by the penitent believer. But we prefer to let Mr. Campbell himself set forth his theory of doctrine. He says:\*

“From Abel to the resurrection of Jesus transgressors obtained remission of sins at the altar through priests and sin-offerings; but it was an imperfect remission as respected the conscience.’ ‘For the law,’ says Paul (more perfect in this respect than the preceding economy), ‘containing a shadow only of the good things to come, and not the very image of these things, never can, with the same sacrifices which they offered yearly, forever make those who

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\* “Christian System,” p. 179.



come to them perfect. Since being offered, would they not have ceased? because the worshipers, being once purified, should have no longer conscience of sins.'” This passage is remarkable, especially for the assumption that “transgressors obtained remission at the altar through priests and sin-offerings” under pre-Christian dispensations. There is not one particle of proof offered for it. In fact, there is not one single passage in the Old Testament that enjoins the offering of a sacrifice as a condition to the pardon of sin. Sacrifices were generally offered by priests; hence the only thing that could be properly the act of the individual would be the bringing of the sacrifice. Again, sacrifices were offered for families, or for the people at large; therefore if pardon of sin were obtained through them, it was, in the vast majority of instances, predicated on the mental act, the state of the mind or heart of the worshiper, which must be a state of repentance and faith. No; this is a lame attempt to offer support to this theory of positive institutes as being required in all ages in order to the remission of sin. The Old Testament nowhere sustains it. Salvation in numerous instances is predicated on faith, trust, repentance, prayer, calling unto the Lord, and these are each and all mental acts.

In a discussion with a minister of this denomination, where the utterances of the psalmists and prophets with reference to prayer for the remission of sins was cited by the writer, the attempt was made to

break the force of these proofs by saying faith and prayer, and faith and calling upon God, is not *faith alone*, as the Methodist Discipline, in Article IX of the Articles of Religion, teaches. To this the reply was made that it was the faith *in* the prayer, and not the faith *and* the prayer, that brought the remission of sin. Wherever the heart exercised an implicit faith in God, there, at that very moment, salvation was realized. Prayer, or calling upon God for pardon of sin, is proof of the fact that pardon was not suspended on obedience to positive institutes, and proof that it was suspended upon a state of mind and heart, which was essential in prayer, without which there could be no genuine prayer. We will give a couple of examples out of the Old Testament out of the large number that might be given: Psalms lxxxvi, 5: "For thou Lord, art good and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy to all them that call upon thee." Isa. lv, 6, 7: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call upon him while he is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the Lord, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon." These explicitly set forth the condition upon which pardon was obtained by sinners under the Old Testament dispensation.

Sometimes the trespass offerings enjoined in Leviticus, chapters iv and v, are cited as examples of sins forgiven upon the offering of sacrifices, but

the unbiased reader will see that these sins of ignorance, that are atoned for by certain sacrifices, are not the sins from which sinners generally need to be justified. The Levitical law nowhere offers any support to this theory, and it must be badly pressed for a foundation to stand upon through the fifteen hundred years of the Mosaic dispensation, to turn to the trespass offerings as an example of positive institutes as conditions to the remission of sin.

Again, this theory seeks to present a parallel between the fall of our first parents and the recovery of the sinner. Mr. Braden, in his debate with Dr. G. W. Hughey, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, states the theory in full, of which we will quote enough to bring out in clear view this particular phase of their doctrinal teaching. He says:

\*“Let us now analyze the successive steps”—that is, of the fall—“and learn when she became guilty in the sight of God.

“1. There was a preacher of falsehood and disobedience; falsehood and disobedience were preached and heard; but she had not become guilty, she had not fallen.

“2. Next she disbelieved God in believing the tempter; but she had not yet fallen. Suppose she had said to him, ‘What you say is reasonable—indeed I believe it—but God has said, “You shall not eat of it,”

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\* “Hughey and Braden Debate,” pp. 189, 190.

and I will obey God,' would she have fallen? Certainly not. It would have been an error of the judgment, but not a sin of the heart. . . .

"3. She desired the result of disobedience and became dissatisfied with the reward of obedience; but she had not yet fallen or become guilty. Suppose she had said to the tempter, 'Sir, I feel a strong desire to eat such pleasant fruit, and to become as God, knowing good and evil; I do n't see why I am restricted in this way; but God has said, "You shall not eat of it," and I will not eat,' would she have fallen? Certainly not.

"4. She next arrayed the best part of her nature not already in rebellion against God, in opposition to his law. She resolved to disobey, and as the act and volition were in her case simultaneous nearly,—the Bible makes them so, and says, 'She ate, and her eyes were opened and she was ashamed,' or guilty; 'then she fell, and not till then.'"

Now, as to the recovery of the sinner, we have this:

"1. The gospel must be preached, and man must hear it. He is not yet pardoned.

"2. He must believe the gospel, or have faith. He is not yet returned; he is not yet pardoned.

"3. Man must repent, he must cease to love sin. . . . He is not yet pardoned. . . .

"4. Since man has been living in rebellion against God, he must now confess Christ before men, as did the eunuch to Philip; but he is not yet saved.

“5. He must next obey the positive command of God, or submit his will to the will of God in his positive ordinance—baptism.”

Let us look at the first side of this attempted parallel, and see how many absurdities are compressed in the compass of its assumptions. According to the second item in the category, Eve could believe the tempter and disbelieve God, and yet have no sin in her heart. To make God willfully a liar, is more than “an error of judgment.” We are told that in addition to this “she desired the result of disobedience,” and yet was not fallen. A monstrous doctrine, squarely in contradiction to the teaching of Jesus, Matt. v, 21–27, where hatred and lust are made murder and adultery. Desire sin in the heart, and yet not sin! How completely in conflict with all our ideas of the nature of sin, that there must be the overt act before there can be sin! The fact is, sin existed before the act was put forth, and had something occurred to prevent the act, there would not have been any less of sin in the heart. Sin existed in Eve when she disbelieved God’s word, and doubted his goodness in the prohibition given. And her recovery from the guilt of sin was secured by her heart-faith in the divine faithfulness and goodness in the provision to be made for the forgiveness of sin. But were it conceded that the first sin consisted only in an overt act of disobedience, it does not follow that the restoration shall be through one formal act of obedience. The restoration



must have underlying it a principle from which all obedience may spring, and that principle is faith, or heart-obedience, "the obedience of faith."

Under the dispensation of the Baptist, Campbell and his followers teach that baptism became the positive institute for the remission of sin, and in this there was a preparation for the Christian dispensation. Braden, on the design of baptism, says:\* "Our fourth argument is, that John the Harbinger was preparing the way for the coming of Christ; baptism was for the remission of sins, and in this he prepared the way for the great law of pardon in Christ. Mark i, 4: 'John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.' Luke iii, 3: 'John came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.' Matt. iii. 5, 6: 'Then went out to John all Jerusalem and Judea, and all the region round about Jordan, and were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.' This baptism was one which could only be administered to penitent believers of John's preaching. To all such it was for the remission of sins, for Matthew assures us he required confession before baptism. Then followed baptism for the remission of their sins."

Here we have the last step from the supposed positive institutes of the patriarchal and Mosaic dispensation to the Christian dispensation, and the theory

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\* "Hughey and Braden Debate," p. 193.



is equally without foundation here. When its unproved assumptions are taken away, it stands out as a sheer fabrication. 1. It is sought to connect John's baptism with remission of sins in causal relation; that is, his baptism was *for*, meaning in order, to remission of sins. Now, not one passage that is cited by Mr. Braden, and none other that can be cited, connects these two—baptism and remission of sins—as antecedent and sequent, cause and effect. One passage will forever set this matter at rest, Matt. iii. 11: "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." Here we have baptism connected with repentance by the preposition *εἰς*, the same preposition that, according to Campbell's teaching, connects baptism and remission in Acts ii. 38. John specifically states that the baptism he performed was *εἰς*—for, or in order to—repentance. Now, what is the obvious and common-sense interpretation of this language? This evidently: "I indeed baptize you with water into [a profession of] repentance." John preached the baptism of repentance *εἰς*—for (into)—the remission of sin. The repentance was for—or, in order to—remission of sin; baptism was for—or, in order to—repentance. Now, let it be borne in mind that it was what John preached that was *for* remission of sin. He preached a baptism, not a baptism of water, but a baptism of repentance. Repentance itself baptized into the remission of sin. It was a repent-

ance that was crowned with faith. Acts xix, 4: "Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe in him that should come after, that is Christ." Now, whatever construction we give to the phrase, "baptism of repentance," it is an unwarranted liberty to construe it as baptism into remission. It can not be *into* repentance and into remission at the same time.

The words, βαπτίζω, βάπτισμα, and βαπτισμός, in the original Greek, are by no means limited in their signification to a submergence into something, or an overwhelming with something. In fact, anything that could bring about a changed condition had the power of baptism, as grief, calamities, sufferings, iniquities, drunkenness, and the like. Hence Jesus says, Luke xii, 50: "I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished!" So also Matt. xx, 22, 23, and Mark x, 38, 39. Christ's cup, baptism. The baptism by drinking the cup of suffering in sacrifice for sin. Isa. xxi, 4, in the Septuagint, reads: "My heart panted, iniquity baptizes me." To these may be added, from classical and patristic sources in the Greek, an indefinite number of like examples, as:

\* Chariton—Baptized by desire.

Plutarch—Baptized by worldly affairs.

Chrysostom—Baptized by passion.

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\* Dale's "Johannic Baptism," pp. 208, 209.

Themistius—Baptized by grief.

Josephus—Baptized by drunkenness.

Chrysostom—Baptized by poverty.

Proclus—Baptized with wantonness.

Plotinus—Baptized with diseases, or with arts of magicians.

Conon—Baptized with much wine.

Justin Martyr, who suffered martyrdom about the year A. D. 166, says, in his dialogue with Trypho the Jew: "By reason therefore of this laver of repentance and knowledge of God, which has been ordained on account of the transgression of God's people, as Isaiah cries, we have believed, and testify that that very baptism which he announced is alone able to purify those who have repented; and this is the water of life. But the cisterns which you have dug for yourselves are broken and profitless to you. For what is the use of that baptism that cleanseth the body alone. Baptize the soul from wrath and from covetousness, and lo, the body is pure."

These Greeks, speaking and using the Greek language as their vernacular, most certainly understood the power of this word βαπτίζω, and these instances show how wide is the range given to the application of the term. And Justin the Martyr shows how repentance will "baptize the soul from wrath, covetousness, envy, hatred." It was this baptism or purification by means of repentance that John preached; and it was *for*, in order to represent this "baptism of repentance," that John baptized with water. But let it not be forgotten that John's baptism was εἰς, "unto

repentance," and "repentance" was εἰς, "unto remission of sins," and not, as Campbell and his followers have it, "baptism with water for remission of sins." Baptism with water and remission of sins are not connected together by the preposition εἰς, *unto*, *into*, or *for*, and it does violence to the text so to construe them.

The idea put forth by these teachers is, that John went throughout Judea and Galilee preaching to the people to come and be baptized with water by him; while the Scriptures represent him as preaching repentance, which purifies or baptizes the soul from sin; and having done this, he administered a symbolical cleansing with water, which, in harmony with the ideas in vogue, represented the repentance.

Mr. Braden says in the quotation above given, that "Matthew assures us he required confession before baptism." Where does Matthew assure us of such a relation as that between confession and baptism? I suppose he thought he found it in ch. iii, vi: "And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." But the very structure of the language indicates that the public confession was made by the baptism. It was a baptism *for* confession of sin, and genuine confession of sin is the public expression of repentance. No language could more explicitly set forth the relation between baptism by water and repentance than this text. It requires blindness, superinduced by a theory, to make confession in order to water baptism out of the text, and that baptism in order to the remission

of sin out of any thing or all that is said about John's baptism in the New Testament.

But the absurdity of this theory of positive institutes, as applied to the dispensation of the Baptist, is further manifest in the fact that Jesus, while ministering here on earth, uniformly forgave sins without any positive acts of obedience, but directly upon an exercise of faith. For example, the sick of the palsy, Matt. ix, 2: "And Jesus seeing their faith, said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee." To the sinning woman in the house of Simon, Luke vii, 44-50: "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace." Here Jesus commanded no obedience to positive institutes, in order to remission. He did not command baptism or any thing else. It can not be said obedience was impossible to them, as it is said of the thief on the cross. The only attempted reply is, that the Master himself was present, and had a right to prescribe such conditions as he saw fit. To this it is sufficient to reply that Jesus never contravened any of the fundamental demands of his law. What he requires of one sinner he requires of all, as conditions to pardon of sin. He lays down the conditions in order to justification, in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican. Luke xviii, 10-14: The publican simply prayed, "God be merciful to me a sinner, . . . and he went down to his house justified rather than the other." The Pharisee had obedience to positive institutes to present as the



grounds of his justification. He could have even said, as was said of his brethren, Mark vii, 4: "And when I come from the market, except I baptize I eat not." \* But he was not justified.

Jesus, in his conversation with Nicodemus, laid down explicitly the conditions in order to salvation, justification, or pardon of sin, John iii, 14-18: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life. For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life. . . . He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." This language is definite as to what Jesus required, in order to the remission of sin—the removal of condemnation. This conversation was had during the so-called dispensation of John the Baptist, and manifestly laid down the conditions to salvation at that time.

This scheme of doctrine teaches that the kingdom of heaven, or "reign of heaven" in the dialect of

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\* In this text the verb βαπτίζω and the noun βαπτισμὸς both occur, and are translated *wash, washing*. Had they been translated baptize and baptism, the ordinary reader would have had some light that he does not now have on this subject of baptism.



Campbellism, was not set up until on the day of Pentecost; and that to Peter was intrusted the keys of the kingdom, and that he opened its doors in his sermon on that occasion. Mr. Campbell puts it in this way :\* “Peter, now holding the keys of the kingdom of Jesus, and speaking under the commission for converting the world, and by the authority of the Lord Jesus—guided, inspired, and accompanied by the Spirit—may be expected to speak the truth, the whole truth plainly and intelligibly, to his brethren, the Jews.” Again:† “Thus commenced the reign of heaven on the day of Pentecost, in the person of the Messiah, the Son of God, and the anointed monarch of the universe.”

Of course, harmonious with this theory, the declarations concerning the Church of God which we find in the Gospels must be explained away, as well as those also about the kingdom of heaven, or kingdom of God, which do not quadrate with it.

For example, the proclamation of the Baptist, and also of the Master himself, that “the kingdom of heaven is at hand,” is always interpreted “the kingdom of heaven has come nigh,” because the Greek *γγιζω* has also that meaning. But in two instances the verb *φθάνω* occurs—Matt. xii, 28, and Luke xi, 20: “The kingdom of God is come unto you,” and “The kingdom of God has come upon you.” It will

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\* “Christian System,” p. 194. † *Id.* p. 171.

hardly be maintained that in these instances the Savior meant to teach these carping, fault-finding Jews that in a few years the kingdom of God would come.

But there are other passages which can not, by any torture or critical emendation, be made to teach that the kingdom of heaven had not yet begun. Matt. xxi, 31: "Verily I say unto you, that the publicans and harlots go into the kingdom of God before you." Matt. xxi, 43: "Therefore I say unto you, the kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a nation bringing forth the fruits thereof." Matt. xxiii, 13: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites, for ye shut up the kingdom of heaven against men: for ye neither go in yourselves, neither suffer ye them that are entering to go in." So also Mark i, 15; iii, 24; Luke xvi, 16, *et al.* It is true these phrases—"kingdom of heaven," "kingdom of God"—are used in the Gospels with somewhat of a diversity of signification,—at one time referring to the divine economy of grace established among men in the calling of Israel to be the depositors of the divine plan of salvation and the conservators of revelation; at another referring to the era of the Messiah; at another referring to his complete conquest of the world to himself; at another to the reign of Christ in the heart; and at another to his glorious perfect kingdom above. But these are all grounded in the same great thought—the sovereignty of Christ. It is therefore unreasonable and confusing to attempt to make these terms to describe

any one epoch in the scheme of divine grace—as Pentecost. The kingdom of heaven in every essential sense was established, or “set up,” among men long before this. But this idea is a part of a scheme of doctrine that has for its aim the complete isolation and separation of the divine economy into parts, to show that at one time God had plans and purposes that at another he completely changed; in other words, that the Christian dispensation presents a thorough emendation of the divine procedure and requirements from what they were under the Mosaic dispensation.

Let it be not forgotten, that if this theory of the “setting up” of the kingdom on Pentecost falls to the ground, a principal stone in the foundation upon which Campbellism builds is gone, and the theory necessarily falls with it. Mr. Campbell says: \* “Having, from all these considerations, seen that until the death of the Messiah his kingdom *could not* commence, and having seen from the record itself that it *did not* commence, before his resurrection, we proceed to the development of things after his resurrection, to ascertain the day upon which the kingdom was set up, or the reign of heaven begun.” Now, all this is necessary to prepare the way for the doctrine of the *commission*, as propounded by him and his followers, and the idea also that Peter, having the keys of the kingdom, opened it in the thirty-eighth verse of the second

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\* “Christian System,” p. 167.

chapter of Acts, and laid down the inflexible conditions to admission into it for the entire Christian dispensation. Hence, Campbell tells us : \* “ The statutes and laws of the Christian kingdom are not to be sought in the Jewish Scriptures, or antecedent to the day of Pentecost.”

A more completely artificial system of faith could not well be evolved. The crucial point of the whole is baptism by immersion as a necessary condition to the pardon of sin. To it the Scriptures must all be made to conform, whatever violence of translation or interpretation may be required.

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\* “ Christian System,” p. 157.

## CHAPTER V.

## THE COMMISSION.

AN immediate doctrinal correlate of Campbell's theory of the kingdom of heaven, is his doctrine of the commission given to the disciples. It is at once assumed that the whole system is to be found here in the narrow compass of a positive precept. Campbell says:\* "The commission for converting the world teaches that immersion was necessary for discipleship; for Jesus said, 'Convert the nations, immersing them into the name,' etc., and 'teaching them to observe,' etc. The construction of the sentence fairly indicates that no person can be a disciple according to the commission who has not been immersed; for the active participle, in connection with the imperative, either declares the manner in which the imperative shall be obeyed, or explains the meaning of the command; . . . for example, 'cleanse the house, sweeping it;' thus, 'convert (or disciple) the nations, immersing them.'"

Also, according to this system, the commission is to be found in modified form in the other three Gospels, Mark xvi, 15, 16: "And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to

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\* "Christian System," p. 198.

every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not shall be damned." Luke xxiv, 46, 47: "And said unto them, 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." John xx, 22, 23: "And when he had said this, he breathed on them, and saith unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost: whosoever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whosoever sins ye retain, they are retained."

A careful comparison of these passages in the light of subsequent Scripture teachings and facts, will show that they lend no support whatever to the ideas that these teachers assume to educe from them.

There are a number of assumptions usually made here that need to be examined,—in the first place, the assumption, in the face of the larger part of the Christian world, that immersion alone is baptism, and that the Savior said, "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, immersing them."\* It is sufficient to dismiss

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\*It appears very certain to the author that if the assumption that God commanded an immersion is true, he would most certainly have commanded an *emersion*. Immersion never takes its subject out of the water. If he is immersed, he is there yet, unless he has been *emersed*, and with emersion the immersion has ended. This fundamental meaning of the word immerse is here brought out that the reader may see that baptism and immersion are not equivalents, as is assumed



this with the remark, inasmuch as we do not at present propose to discuss the mode of baptism, that if immersion is an essential condition to the remission of sin, is it not passing strange that the act was not carefully defined, so that multiplied millions of intelligent, honest people could not be so greatly mistaken as they have been through the Christian ages?

A second assumption is that μαθητεύω—to disciple or make disciples, rendered “teach” in the Authorized Version—is synonymous with convert, and remit sins. This idea is a very forcible illustration of the close affinity between the theories of Campbell and the doctrine of Rome. Both assume that they are commanded to go and remit sins, and both claim to do so by baptism. This is the only difference: Rome continues to exercise the prerogative after baptism; Campbellism assumes to go no further than baptism. Conversion is a word of quite a latitude of meaning. An individual is converted when he has changed his faith or opinions. This a purely intellectual process. He may do this himself by investigation or inquiry after the truth; or the teaching of another may be the

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by Campbell and his followers. A person may be in a baptized state; but he can not be in a state of immersion without being hopelessly drowned. Baptism and immersion are not synonymous. Baptism is the rite of cleansing or purification, and its ideas are wholly spiritual; immersion is a physical act of submergence underneath a physical substance or fluid. Earlier advocates of this theory called it dipping, and dipping it is; for the word *dip* takes out again.

principal agency in it. In the second case, the teacher may be said to have converted the other. But to convert by the mere act of baptism, is an extension to the meaning of the word that certainly has no warrant whatever in Scripture.

It will be observed that the teaching comes after the baptism in the only commission where baptism is mentioned. First, "disciple them by baptism;" then, "teach" them. But does "disciple" and "convert" mean the same thing? Alexander Campbell was the first to broach such an idea. To make a disciple means to make a learner, a pupil. To convert means to change in heart, life, character. The first is an outward act of profession; the second is an inward spiritual change. So the great body of the Church for ages, even from apostolical times, has understood the commission in Matt. xxviii, 19, to authorize the baptism of infants.

There can be no conversion, the followers of Campbell admit, without faith, repentance, confession. If so, how could the disciples "convert by baptism?" If, on the other hand, as Mr. Campbell says, conversion and immersion are the same thing,\* then repentance, faith, and confession are no part of it. In this hopeless confusion are we left by this attempt to harmonize these ideas.

In the Scripture use of the term, conversion refers

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\* "Christian System," p. 195.

to all that change that takes place in a sinner to turn him from sin to the service of God ; that is, conviction of sin, repentance, faith, pardon, regeneration, adoption. The work is both divine and human,—conviction, pardon, regeneration, adoption are the divine side; “repentance towards God and faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ” \* are the human side. There is not one single passage of Scripture that, either directly or by fair inference, calls baptism conversion. Mr. Campbell quotes Acts xxvi, 17, 18: “Unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among the sanctified.” Luke xxii, 32: “When thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren;” and James v, 19, 20: “If any of you err from the truth, and one convert him, let him know that he who converteth the sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death, and hide a multitude of sins.” If we had been selecting passages of Scripture to show the utter fallacy of this doctrine, we could have selected none better for such purpose. In the first the apostle Paul most clearly sets forth that he was sent to the Gentiles to convert them by *teaching*; and as to the divine side of the work, the forgiveness of sins and sanctification was predicated upon faith as the individual act. There is no water baptism in the

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\* Acts xx, 21.

passage, and the inference that places it in the verb *ἐπιστρέφω*, is without any warrant whatever. There must be, indeed, a wonderful virtue in water baptism, if it will "turn men from darkness unto light."

But perhaps some follower of A. Campbell may say that he meant that baptism is only an essential step in the process of turning. To this it is sufficient to reply that if converting and baptizing in the commission are identical in signification, then Campbell's interpretation must, without limitation, be put on these passages.

With regard to the second passage which speaks of Peter's reclamation after his grievous fall, what evidence is there to show that he was baptized? If reclamation is conversion, and baptism is conversion,\* then when was Peter converted or baptized? And why do not the followers of A. Campbell convert all backsliders in the same way?

And, with reference to the quotation from James v, 19, 20, the first verse of the quotation clearly sets forth that the conversion here spoken of is the conversion of the brother who may have "erred from the way," a backslidden disciple; and if conversion and baptism are the same thing, here is a clear case where baptism must be repeated.

A third assumption is, that Christian baptism is absolutely essential to making disciples, while no fact

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\* See "Christian System," pp. 198, 208, 209.

is better attested than that there were disciples of Christ who had never received Christian baptism. In Acts xix, 1, we find disciples who were to all practical purposes such, and accepted of God, who yet were not baptized by Christian baptism. Mark, the inspired historian, called them "disciples."

Hence, from these insuperable objections, we think the inference is legitimate and necessary, that the theory finds no support in the commission as defined by Matthew.

But the stronghold of the theory is believed by its advocates to be the commission as given by St. Mark xvi, 15, 16. This they triumphantly point to as a "thus saith the Lord," in support of their doctrine. Mr. Braden, in his debate with Dr. Hughey, says:\* "You can all understand a plain 'Thus saith the Lord.' The statement, 'He that believes and is baptized shall be saved from his sins,' is as plain as the command, 'Thou shalt not steal.' God has said, 'He that believes and is baptized shall be saved from his sins.' Do you believe him? Did the Son of God mean what he said?"

Now, if there is a passage in the Scriptures, in the *Authorized Version*, that seems to teach this doctrine, it is this one. If it can not be made out from this, then it can not be made out at all. Let us look at its terms. It will not be denied that "shall be

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\* "Hughey and Braden Debate," pp. 195-196.



saved" and "shall be damned" are in antithesis to each other. If so, the salvation spoken of here is final or eternal salvation. "He that believeth not" shall not be damned until the end of his probation. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" at last. "He that believeth not shall be damned" at last. So that this does not set forth the conditions to present salvation, the salvation of the sinner, but the conditions to their final salvation. We have called attention to this fact to show that there are not two conditions or personal acts required here, but a condition, faith; and a state of heart, baptism or purity.

The propriety of this interpretation will be more manifest when it is seen that if both faith and baptism are made personal conditions or acts of the individual, then, to complete the antithesis, the text must read "he that believeth not and is not baptized shall be damned." The doctrine of Campbellism is, he that is not baptized shall be damned—the very thing the text does not say. It affirms that damnation is the consequence of unbelief. The only escape from this difficulty is to say that every true believer will be baptized. Which is squarely untrue. Again it is manifest that if the proposition is true that "he that believeth not shall be damned," it is also true that "he that believeth shall not be damned," that is, shall be saved. The Savior says identically the same thing in John iii, 18: "He that believeth on him is not condemned; but he that believed not, is condemned



already." See also v, 24; vi, 40-47; and xx, 31. Here we have an antithesis that clearly sets forth that condemnation is predicated on unbelief alone, while non-condemnation is the result of faith. The passage therefore does not teach the doctrine of condemnation for not being baptized, and this is Campbellism.

The whole difficulty in the interpretation of this passage arises from the attempt to read ritual or water baptism into it. Place Spirit baptism in the text, and it coalesces into perfect harmony. "He that believeth and is purified shall be saved." "He that believeth not" will not be purified or baptized, and therefore shall be damned.

\* Dr. Murdock, translator of the Syriac New Testament into English, in an article on the 'Syriac Words for Baptism' in the *Bibliotheca Sacra*, October, 1850, says: "The declaration in Mark xvi, 15, 16, which in the Greek reads, 'Go ye into all the world and preach my gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned,' would in the Syriac read, 'He that believeth and standeth fast shall be saved.'" This serves to show that in very ancient times—as early as the second century of our era—this passage was conceived not to refer to the mere rite of water baptism, but to something more spiritual and enduring—something expressive of a state of character.

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\* "Christic Baptism," p. 399.

But the reader of the Revised Version will notice that the section of Mark, sixteenth chapter, that contains the passage in question, is separated by a space from the rest of the text. We are told that this was done because it was not believed to be Mark's writing, but an addendum by some subsequent hand. (See Roberts's "Companion to the New Revision," pages 61-63.) The reasons for this are: 1. It was not to be found in the two oldest manuscripts, the *Codices Sinaiticus* and *Vaticanus*. 2. The Primitive fathers, Eusebius, Gregory of Nyssa, Victor of Antioch, Severus of Antioch, Jerome, and others, have said that Mark did not write it, and the best copies extant in their day did not contain it. 3. Internal evidence is strongly in support of the claim that it is an addendum subsequently made. It contains at least seventeen new words that St. Mark nowhere else in his Gospel has employed. We think these objections are fatal to it as genuine Scripture. Certainly they present sufficient reasons why the damnation of the believing penitent should not be predicated upon his lack of baptism.

The commission, according to St. Luke, has nothing whatever to say about baptism. And yet Mr. Campbell and his followers claim to find it in the words "that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name." The preposition here translated *in* is ἐπὶ, the primary meaning of which is *upon*. It is not the preposition that connects bap-

tism and the name of Christ—that is, ἐνς invariably. The obvious meaning is, “that remission of sins should be preached upon (faith in his) name.” So Paul said to the Philippian jailer: “Believe [ἐνί] on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.” Similar illustrations of the use of this preposition are to be found in Acts ii, 38; iii, 16; xi, 17; xv, 8, 9; 1 Peter i, 22. In all of which cases the preposition ἐνί, upon, connected with the name of Christ, either has faith mentioned or implied; and a large number of similar instances might be quoted in addition to these.

The commission as given by John xx, 22, 23, is usually presented by them to show that the apostles were charged with the responsibility of remitting sins, and that this same prerogative has been handed down from them to all preachers of the gospel in perpetuity. Of course, so far as it goes, the claims of the Papal Church could not be more absolute. These men hold the keys of the kingdom in their right as ministers of the word, and they open and shut the doors at their convenience. The writer has known them to postpone the remission of sins for two weeks, and it is a common occurrence to defer this remitting act for twenty-four hours, or from the time the penitent believer makes the proper confession until the next evening; or until the baptistery can be gotten ready, or water sufficient can be found, be the time long or short.

But this is simply one of several examples where difficult passages of Scripture are seized by them, and given an interpretation in harmony with their views, and then cited as proof-texts. The most reasonable interpretation of the passage in question is this: the apostles of the Lord, under him as founders of the Church, were, through the inspiration given them, endowed with powers and prerogatives in the Church, that, however necessary at that time, were not perpetuated after them.

This apostolical authority and power was manifested in several instances, as in the case of Hymeneus and Alexander in 1 Tim. i, 20, and Ananias and Sapphira in Acts v, 1-11. These were prerogatives that grew out of the apostolate, that have not been perpetuated, and most certainly not in the performance of mere ordinances. Nothing but the demands of a false system could ever have prompted to the construction put upon the apostolical commission by these teachers.

## CHAPTER VI.

## CAMPBELLISM ON FAITH AND REPENTANCE.

CAMPBELLISM, in order to present a system that will be consistent with itself, is compelled to place faith before repentance, and also to deny heart-faith, making it to consist only in the assent of the mind to truths established. Require the system to put repentance in the right place in the sinner's approach to God, and its important proof-texts require at once an explanation different from that they give them, and in conflict with their theory of doctrine. This fact we will make plain when we come to consider Acts ii, 38.

We will let them define the relation of faith and repentance in their own language. Mr. Campbell says: "Repentance is an effect of faith," having defined faith above as the "simple belief of testimony, or of the truth, and never can be more or less than that."\* So that, according to him, faith is the merely intellectual act of the acceptance of truth, and repentance must necessarily follow after such a faith. Mr. Braden lays down the following order:† "1. Hearing the gospel. 2. Believing the gospel as faith. 3. Re-

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\* "Christian System," p. 52.

† "Hughey and Braden," p. 186.

pentance. 4. Confession of Christ. 5. Obedience or baptism. 6. Pardon or remission." This order is essential to the system. Reverse it, and the scheme of doctrine falls to the ground. Put faith after repentance, and Acts ii, 38, must be given a different interpretation from that they are accustomed to give it.

Faith after repentance, however, is the uniform divine order. Nowhere within the range of the Divine Word is the order reversed. In Matt. xxi, 32, we have a specific statement as to the relation that faith and repentance sustain to each other: "For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen it, repented not afterward, that ye might believe him." What can more explicitly set forth the precedence of repentance? It will not help the theory at all to say that the verb for "repented" is *μεταμέλομαι*, and not *μετανοέω*; for the repentance here is clearly defined as a repentance that, with faith, would have brought them into "the kingdom of God," verse 31. Again, it is not by any means conceded among scholars that *μεταμέλομαι* defines simple regret, and never otherwise. Dean Trench, in his "New Testament Synonyms," clearly disproves this idea. But *regret* is a part of repentance, and belongs to all genuine repentance; and therefore, unless repentance is divided in two, and faith put between regret and godly sorrow for sin, the argument from the word amounts to nothing.



Again, in Mark i, 15, the same relation is clearly exemplified: "And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of heaven is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel;" also Acts xx, 21: "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." These will suffice to show that in the gospel plan repentance comes before faith.

The mistake of Campbell and his followers arises from their misconception of the nature of faith. With them, faith is merely an act of the intellect. It is such as all persons put forth who believe the Bible to be the word of God. For if it is conceived of as an act of the heart accepting Christ as the Savior from sin, it must be preceded by repentance, sorrow for sin, and an earnest turning from sin. Christ can not be accepted as a Savior from sin only by such as are tired of sin and want to get rid of it. A faith that comes before repentance must come before a godly sorrow for sin, or a desire to turn from sin. It is a rather singular faith in Christ that does not desire to be saved from sin. Yet this is the state of the case if faith precedes repentance. But it is often retorted, How can a man repent until he believes the Word? "He must hear it, he must believe it before he will repent." This is not necessarily true; multiplied thousands truly repent who never hear the Word. All that is necessary to a genuine repentance, is the belief that I am a sinner, and a desire to get rid of my sins. This

belief may exist with or without the Word. But a belief in Christ as my Savior can not exist without sorrow for sin, and therefore the faith that in any sense has to do with personal salvation, is a faith after repentance, and founded on repentance.

Attention has been called to the fact that if repentance and faith were placed in right relation to each other, a material change must be made in Campbell's interpretation of Acts ii, 38. Faith after repentance will place it in connection with "the name of Jesus Christ," and the passage will read: "Repent and be baptized every one of you [believing] on the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." And this will at once dispose of the supposed relation as instrumental cause between baptism and remission of sin. "[Believing] on the name of Jesus Christ is *for* the remission of sin." The order then will stand: "Repent, and [believing] on the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, be baptized every one of you." Baptism is upon repentance and faith on the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Now, let it not be forgotten that if faith comes after repentance, it *must* occupy just the place in this passage that is above given to it. *It can occupy no other.* This is sufficient reason, we think, for their disagreeing with all Protestant Christendom as to the relation of faith and repentance.

But it is said by the advocates of Campbellism

that the persons who were directly addressed in Acts ii, 38, had faith, because they were pricked to the heart, and asked, "What shall we do?" Here is the mistake before spoken of,—intellectual belief or conviction as to the truth is put for faith in Christ as a personal Savior. They were convinced of sin and felt their need of salvation; but this was by no means saving faith in Christ. Again, it may with equal propriety be said they had repented, for they had a painful sense of sin and a desire to know how to get rid of it. In other words, they had sorrow for sin, and in their hearts were turning from it; and this is genuine repentance. So that the word translated *repent*, in this connection simply means *turn*. "Turn and be baptized [believing] on the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Their baptism was to be an expression of their faith *on* or *upon* Jesus Christ for the remission of sin.

The followers of Campbell are accustomed to assert that there is but one kind of faith. In this they are simply following in the wake of their great leader, who declares that "faith is only the belief of testimony,"\* meaning thereby to deny that there is any property or quality belonging to saving faith other than the mere intellectual assent to truth established. This in fact he asserts:† "Here I am led to expatiate upon a very popular and pernicious error

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\* "Christian System," p. 113. † *Id.* 114.

of modern times. That error is that the nature or power and saving efficacy of faith is not in the truth believed, but in the *nature* of our faith, or in the manner of believing the truth. Hence all that unmeaning jargon about the nature of faith, and all those disdainful sneers at what is called 'historic faith,' as if there could be any faith without history written or spoken. Who ever believed in Christ without hearing the history of him?" What confusion must have existed in this man's mind to cause him to write, to use his term, such a jargon of absurdities. He certainly would not have the reader to understand that there is no difference in *nature* between the faith of devils and that of pious Abraham. (James ii.) Or that Paul is not defining the *nature* of faith in Rom. x, 10: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness." Again, "weak" faith, "strong" faith, "little" faith, "great" faith, are terms defining the *nature* of the particular faith referred to in the Scriptures. In Matt. ix, 29, Jesus said to the blind men: "According to your faith be it done unto you." By this he meant, According to the *nature* of your faith be it done unto you; for they had already faith enough to ask to be restored to sight. And furthermore, how unreasonable the idea that the saving efficacy of faith is only in the truth believed, and not in the nature of the faith also! The truth believed is the divine side of the salvation, and the manner of believing it is our individual act, and

we may believe with the heart, or we may not; and right between these lies the possibility of our salvation. How does it meet any issue concerning the *nature* of the individual's personal act of faith to say, "The saving efficacy is in the truth believed?" It is there before it is believed, and there if it never is believed; but it is only appropriated to the individual by the manner of his personal belief. The fact is, the saving efficacy is back of the truth also—is in God alone. His truth contains the promise of this efficacy, and heart faith appropriates it. It is characteristic of Mr. Campbell, and also of his followers, to go clear outside of the real issue, and beat down men of straw. In this paragraph on faith there is still another false issue. The advocates of "heart faith" do not deny "historic faith." There can be "historic faith" without heart faith, but there can not be heart faith without some historic faith, and we do Mr. Campbell's intellectual discernment the credit to believe that this sophism did not deceive himself.

Again, these teachers recognize the fact that "faith purifies the heart," being compelled to admit the truth as set forth by the apostle Peter in his account of the conversion of the household of Cornelius, given in Acts xv, 8, 9: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." They usually lay down their doctrinal formula after

this style: "Faith purifies the heart, repentance purifies the life, and baptism changes the state or relation." But it follows that if faith purifies the heart, and faith precedes repentance, an individual may have a pure heart and yet be unrepentant; not only so, but be an heir of heaven, for the Savior says: "Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God." This objection is fatal to this scheme of doctrine, for it can not be modified so as to annul the force of it. Faith must come before repentance, and these together before baptism, else the whole scheme falls to the ground. Admit heart faith after repentance, and place conviction the result of historic faith before repentance, and you have all the conditions, or rather the complete condition, necessary to salvation. You have salvation—for purity of heart is in itself the salvation of the sinner—and baptism will then be an act of grateful obedience upon the part of the child of God.



## CHAPTER VII.

### THE SPECIAL TERRITORY OF THE THEORY.

ACTS II, 38.

WE now approach the stronghold of Campbellism, aware that all intruders are warned off this ground as trespassers. It belongs by special pre-emption to the theory. Who that has heard them preach has not heard of Acts ii, 38? It is believed by them to be just in the right place, and at just the right time, and to have just the right ring to make out a clear case for the doctrine. But despite the supposed invincibleness of the deductions made from the passage, we will examine it in the light of clear and explicit Scripture teaching, and upon rules of interpretation, the justness of which can not be questioned.

In their employment of this passage in support of their theory of doctrine, the claim is uniformly made that it stands just at the door of the gospel dispensation. Peter, "holding the keys of the kingdom," is opening the door; is laying down the law of universal induction into this kingdom, which is repentance, confession, baptism, remission of sins. But let us look at the passage: "Repent, and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ

for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

The thoughtful student of the passage will at once see that the ideas above given spring rather out of a doctrinal prepossession than legitimately out of the text. Their interpretation is founded on several false assumptions: 1. That Peter here lays down the law of initiation into the kingdom of Christ. 2. That this command was intended for all Gentiles as well as the Jews then present. 3. That baptism by water is the baptism spoken of in the text. Some eminent scholars regard *repentance* as the baptism here spoken of, as notably Dr. Dale, in his great work "Christic and Patristic Baptism."\* 4. That *for* the remission of sins means *in order to* remission of sins. 5. That the preposition *εἰς*, translated *for*, connects causatively baptism and "the remission of sins."

We may say in the outstart, in reviewing this passage, that if it contains a doctrine so vital, so

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\* Dr Dale, by several examples of contemporary usage from reputable Greek writers, shows that repentance was believed to be a baptism within and of itself. That the term baptize is applied to a change wrought in the heart is something that can not be disputed. In Col. ii, 11, 12, we have circumcision of the heart, "the circumcision of Christ" called baptism. In a quotation already given from Justin the Martyr, we have repentance designated as the true baptism. So also Josephus defines John's baptism (*Ant. ch. xviii, 6-2*) as being twofold, outward by water, and inward by repentance. The line of thought suggested by Dr. Dale's position is a very interesting one, and worthy of careful study.

important as the unvarying condition to the salvation of the sinner, it has been most unfortunately constructed; so much so that its importance as a doctrinal formula was not discovered until Alexander Campbell brought it to light.

The assumption that the apostle Peter is here laying down the law of induction into the kingdom of Christ for all times and all races, is without any proof whatever, and squarely contradicted as to the facts, even though we should concede the interpretation they place upon this passage; for Peter in chapter iii, 19, says: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord." Here is not a word said about baptism in order to the remission of sins. In order to get baptism into this passage, it is assumed that baptism and conversion are the same thing.\* "But the second discourse recorded by St. Luke from the same Peter, pronounced in Solomon's Portico, is equally pointed, clear, and in full support of this position. After he had explained the miracle which he had wrought in the name of the Lord Jesus, and stated the same gospel facts, he proclaims the same command: 'Reform and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out,' or 'Reform and turn to God, that so your sins may be blotted out; that seasons of refreshment from the

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\* "Christian System," p. 195.

presence of the Lord may come, and that he may send Jesus, whom the heavens must receive until the accomplishment of all the things which God has foretold,' etc. Peter, in substituting other terms in this proclamation for those used on Pentecost, does not preach a *new* gospel, but *the same* gospel in terms equally strong. He uses the same word in the first part of the command which he used on Pentecost. Instead of '*be immersed*,' he has here '*be converted*,' or '*turn to God*;' instead of '*for the remission of sins*,' here it is '*that your sins may be blotted out*,' etc."

It is hard to conceive anything more completely visionary than this attempt at harmonization. 1. "*Be converted*" and "*be immersed*" are assumed to be identical in meaning. The word here translated "*be converted*," is ἐπιστρέφω, and is in the active voice, and should be translated "*turn again*." "*Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out*." It requires therefore a marvelous stretch of the imagination to make this word the equivalent of the passive, "*be baptized*." The obvious truth is, that the act of turning is the act of heart faith, which is required in order to the blotting out of transgressions. There is not the remotest reference to water baptism in the whole passage. It is simply *per force* dragged into the text to save a theory. This may be written down as a case of remission of sins promised without water baptism, and obtained by five thousand by faith. See Acts iv, 4:

"Howbeit many which heard the word believed, and the number of the men was about five thousand."

With equal explicitness is the preaching of the apostle Peter to the household of Cornelius in antagonism to the assumption. Peter preaches *faith* as the condition to the remission of sins. Acts x, 43: "To him give all the prophets witness that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." And instantly upon this preaching "the Holy Ghost fell upon all that heard the word," sealing thus "the remission of sins" by faith without water baptism, for the baptism came after this. It is plain, therefore, that if Peter laid down the uniform law of the kingdom, he forgot it in a very short time.

The assumption that "*for* remission of sins" means "*in order to* remission of sins," is always made when this passage is cited by them. Baptism to represent, or symbolize, the remission of sins is *for* the remission of sins. Baptism as a sign and seal of remission of sins in the name of Christ is *for* the remission of sins. For these purposes it is not *for* as a condition in order to remission of sins. But it is replied that whatever repentance is *for*, baptism is *for*, and in the same sense. There is plausibility in this, and hence we maintain that the interpretation is entirely wrong that connects baptism and repentance with remission of sins by the preposition *εἰς*, rendered *for*. The "name of Jesus Christ" and "the remission of sins" are connected by *for*; and this was



the purpose of the apostle to bring vividly before the minds of these Jews that remission of sins was in the name of Christ alone. The recognition of this name *for* the remission of sins was the essential thing for them. And that recognition was secured by heart faith in him, or *upon* him.

This, to the writer, very apparent principle of interpretation, leads to the fact that the text contains an ellipsis that should have been supplied in translating. *Ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι* does not mean the same as *εἰς τὸ ὄνομα* in Matt. xxviii, 19. The first means "upon the name," the second means "*into the name.*" Alexander Campbell says:\* "*Βαπτίζω* and *ἐπὶ* so perfectly disagree as never to be found construed in amity in any Greek author, sacred or profane." While we do not accept this as at all true, yet we quote it as serving to show that he could not reasonably accept the phrase in Acts ii, 38, as a substitute for "baptism into the name of Christ," or the baptismal formula.

The primary meaning, then, of *ἐπὶ* is *on* or *upon*. Then, *upon the name of Christ* is *believing upon his name*. There are quite a number of passages that exemplify this. Luke xxiv, 17: "And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached [*ἐπὶ*] in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem." "Remission of sins on his name" is remission upon faith in his name, or "believing on his name." So

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\* "On Baptism," p. 154.



Acts iii, 16: "And his name, through [ἐπὶ] faith in his name, hath made this man strong whom you see and know; yea, the faith which is by [διὰ] him hath given him this perfect soundness in the presence of you all." Peter, in describing the conversion of the household of Cornelius, presents it as an exact parallel of the Pentecostal occasion, Acts xi, 17: "Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as he did unto us, who *believed on* [ἐπὶ] the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I, that I could withstand God?" If anything could give more forcible illustration and warrant for reading ἐπὶ τῷ ὀνόματι in Acts ii, 38, "believing on the name of Jesus Christ," it is incomprehensible as to what it could be. Here is an exact parallel of the phrase in Acts ii, 38, with "believed" just where we claim it should be; and furthermore, the inspired apostle tells us, all the facts of the cases were similar. (See Acts xv, 8, 9.) For ἐπὶ in connection with the "name of Christ," meaning "believing on his name," see Acts ix, 42; xvi, 31; xxii, 19; Rom. iv, 5 and 24; ix, 33; x, 11; Phil. iii, 9; 1 Tim. i, 16-18; iv, 10; v, 5; and numerous other passages.

Acts ii, 38, is the only passage in the Scriptures where baptism and the name of Christ are connected with the preposition ἐπὶ. This, then, prepares the way for the proper rendering of the passage: "Repent," or rather, "turn, and be baptized, every one of you, [believing] on the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the

not so in Webster & Hort, where

it is

Holy Ghost." Now, Campbellism, in the use of this text, always reads baptism and "*for* remission of sins" together, as if *for* immediately linked these two together; whereas in the Greek text there are seven words intervening, and one of these words is a connective by which baptism is linked to "the name of Christ." It must therefore read, "be baptized *upon* and *for*." The connective power of *for* is fully met in joining together the "name of Jesus Christ" and "the remission of sins." Who can dispute the statement that "the name of Jesus Christ is *for* the remission of sins?" If this is so, the text does not teach that baptism is *for* the remission of sins. If baptism was *for*, or in order to, remission of sins, is it not remarkable that nothing more is said about a matter so important as this? And is it not strange that God should violate this unchangeable order in the case of the household of Cornelius?

There was an appropriateness in Peter's enjoining upon these Jews at this time the outward expression of their acceptance of Christ, namely, baptism. The same reason did not exist in the case of the Gentiles, and so the visible badge of discipleship was not enjoined upon them in connection with their acceptance by faith of Christ as their Savior. It was sufficient to exhort them to believe on Christ, and baptism as a Christian duty would be attended to by them in due time. So to-day in heathen countries our missionaries exhort to baptism as a visible pledge of the convert's

breaking caste with heathenism. The circumstances cause them to lay a stress upon it as a matter of public profession there that could not be placed upon it here.

But if faith comes after repentance—and so the Scriptures uniformly teach—it comes just where we have put it in this passage; and if it must be supplied at the juncture indicated, it forever separates baptism and the remission of sins as antecedent and consequent, and places the only proper Scriptural antecedent as a condition to the remission of sins in connection with the name of Christ.

So much attention has been given to this passage, because by the advocates of the theory of baptismal remission it is regarded as a stronghold, and because we believe that a fair and reasonable interpretation of the passage, at once and forever places it upon the side of spiritual Christianity, and takes it out of the hands of those who make the mere mode of a ritual act the very gate to salvation.

## CHAPTER VIII.

## OTHER SUPPOSED PROOF-TEXTS.

THESE teachers, by a process peculiarly their own, seek to draft into the service of their theory quite a number of passages of Scripture in the Acts of the Apostles and the Epistles. But it is at once manifest that their interpretations are mostly efforts to harmonize the texts in question with the dogma. For if the doctrine is true, it is fundamental and should often appear in the Scriptures. Faith as the condition to justification appears on almost every page of the Gospels or Epistles. If baptism is an equally important condition, it ought to appear as often. Hence it need not be a matter of great astonishment if these people find baptism as a condition to salvation where others do not.

It is, however, no doubt, a matter of not a little surprise that an attempt should be made to prove this dogma by the case of Cornelius, given in Acts x, 34-48. But Mr. Campbell, in his debate with Professor Rice, actually assumes to prove his doctrine by this instance; so do also the present exponents of the doctrine. As Campbell presents the best attempt at

an argument, we quote him: \* “My seventh argument is deduced from the conversion of Cornelius and his Gentile friends. His excellent moral character, and his great devotion to prayer and alms-deed, had not yet saved him. The message received from God directed him to send for the man who had the keys of the kingdom of heaven, who could tell him words by which he and his family and friends ‘*might be saved.*’ I need not relate the whole story as it is represented in the tenth and eleventh chapters of Acts. Peter, in relating the matter afterward, as reported in the eleventh chapter, develops more fully the intention of the mission, and details some of the incidents more at length. Particularly in the fourteenth verse he gives an account of the necessity of his sermon—as ‘words whereby Cornelius and his family might be saved.’ He also states that as he began to speak these words—as soon as he got to remission of sins through the name of the Lord Jesus—at that moment the Spirit, in its miraculous attestations, fell upon all the Gentiles present, as it had done in the baptism of the Jews on Pentecost. . . . Soon, then, as Peter saw all this, he asked the believing Jews, who had accompanied him from Joppa, whether they could on any account refuse them the grace of baptism. No demurrer having been instituted, he commanded them to be baptized *in the name of the Lord.* Thus also

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\* “Campbell and Rice,” p. 440.

were the Gentiles saved by faith, repentance, and baptism."

This extensive quotation is given that the reader may see the adroit manner in which the facts are modified to suit a theory. At each step from the outstart there is a slight manipulation of the narrative, so that in the outcome the theory may be fitted into it.

In the first place, the word *saved* in Acts xi, 14, applied to Cornelius, is assumed to signify the pardon of sins—his justification and acceptance with God—while it is a fact that God showed Peter that Cornelius was accepted of him before this. Verse 15: "What God hath cleansed, that call not thou common." And not only so, but Peter recognized the divine acceptance of Cornelius in this language. Verses 34, 35: "Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons; but in every nation he that feareth God and worketh righteousness is accepted of him." So already Cornelius was accepted of God. The word *saved* here undoubtedly means, saved from Gentile superstition and ignorance—saved to the consciousness of acceptance with God, under the broad privileges of the gospel. But suppose that *saved* here does mean pardon of sin, what is there to prove that he was not saved until he was baptized with water? Did not the Holy Ghost fall on them before they were baptized with water? And was not this divine seal of their acceptance with God, made the grounds for their baptism with water? Again, did not the



apostle declare that the forgiveness of sin was predicated on faith in Christ? Verse 43: "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name, *who-soever believeth in him* shall receive remission of sins." At this juncture the Holy Ghost fell upon them, "while Peter yet spake these words." Note the adroitness of Mr. Campbell's narration of this circumstance. He represents Peter as telling his brethren of the circumcision at Jerusalem, that as he "began to speak these words—as soon as he got to remission of sins through the name of the Lord Jesus—at that moment the Spirit in his miraculous attestations fell upon all the Gentiles present." Why leave out remission of sins through "*believing in him?*" These were the last words Peter spoke before the descent of the Holy Ghost. Why say "miraculous attestations" when defining this baptism of the Holy Ghost? Peter says, chapter xi, 17, that it was "the *like gift* as unto us who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ;" that is, unto those of his Jewish brethren who received the Holy Ghost at Pentecost, not in the first outpouring, but that which afterward came upon the three thousand—the *gift of the Holy Ghost*. Since followers of Campbell make a distinction between the *baptism* and the *gift of the Holy Ghost*, we desire that this fact shall be noted. But, for the argument's sake, it makes no difference whether it is considered wholly miraculous or not; the truth remains, that God set his seal to their acceptance before baptism by water.

Had it been designed to furnish a positive refutation of the theory of Campbell, we are unable to conceive how it could be more perfectly done than in this instance. How that can be regarded as a condition to the remission of sin that does not come until after God has set the seal of his approbation on the believer, will ever remain inexplicable to careful thinkers. No consequent can be its own cause, or antecedent. The use of this instance by Mr. Campbell as an argument for his theory looks very much like an attempt by sheer audacity to break somewhat of the force of the argument to be deduced from this against his scheme of doctrine.

The narration of the baptism of Paul is uniformly presented by them as lending support to the dogma. Campbell states the argument in this form:\* “Paul was now a believing penitent, a proper subject for the grace of baptism; for baptism has its peculiar grace as well as prayer or fasting. Paul had inquired of the Lord what he should do. The Lord commissioned Ananias to inform him. He went to Paul’s room, . . . and instantly commanded him to ‘be baptized and wash away his sins, calling upon the name of the Lord.’† Now, the washing away of his sins was certainly to be accomplished through the water of baptism. . . . Neither his faith nor his repentance had washed away his sins. . . . In any other case

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\* “Campbell and Rice,” p. 439. † Acts xxii, 16.

the literary world would interpret this phrase as I have done."

1. In order to get an intelligent understanding of this matter, let us inquire, first: What was the extent of Ananias's commission? Was he commanded to baptize Paul? If baptism is conversion, as Campbell says, then it was the most important part of Ananias's commission, and yet he does not mention it at all in connection with this commission. But in Acts ix, 17, he, going in unto Saul "and putting his hands on him, said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way, as thou camest, hath sent me that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost." Now note carefully the result of the fulfillment of this commission, verse 18. "And immediately there fell from his eyes, as it had been, scales; and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." If Ananias's mission was fulfilled as he defined it, Paul "received sight and was filled with the Holy Ghost." Having received this baptism—the true baptism—he was, like Cornelius and his household, baptized with water. But he did not first receive sight at the laying on of Ananias's hands, to be then baptized with water, after which to be baptized with the Holy Ghost. That is not the order of the text, nor is it the order of the divine procedure; for when physical sight was restored by the divine interposition, spiritual sight was also given. Again, there is no question that the first blessing that

came to Saul after the imposition of Ananias's hands, was the restoration of sight. But it was by the laying on of the apostle's hands often, that the Holy Ghost was imparted. (See ch. viii, 17; xix, 6.) Hence the receiving of sight and of the Holy Ghost came before the water baptism.

But it is said Saul was commanded to "wash away his sins by baptism." (Acts. xxii, 16.) In this assertion there are three assumptions that are without proof: 1. That "wash away thy sins" means through baptism performed as a *condition*. If this be so, the language is exceedingly figurative. It will not be claimed that the water of baptism actually washes away sins. If it does not literally wash away sins, it must simply stand for that that washes away sins, the baptism of the Holy Ghost. With this agrees the language of the apostle himself, 1 Cor. vi, 11: "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God;" and 1 Cor. xii, 13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit."

2. Again, it is assumed that this is water baptism of which Ananias is speaking. The word *baptize* in the text is in the *middle voice*, and therefore has the reflexive signification of that voice. A literal translation would be: "And why tarriest thou? arise and

baptize thyself, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Dr. Dale says,\* with reference to the translation above: "It will be observed that the force of the middle voice is retained in this translation. A discriminating use of words in the Scriptures has always a reason for it, and our business is not to change the statement to make it accord with some other statement, but to accept it and seek for the reason of it. This is the only passage where βαπτίζω is so used in the middle voice. There must be a reason for it. The whole transaction is unique. The baptism is entirely removed from ordinary baptism. There is nothing in the teaching of Scripture, or in its free and frequent use of language, to prevent a call being made upon Saul to 'baptize himself and wash away his sins by prayer.' The translation of the passage from the Syriac, by Dr. Murdock, is as follows: 'Arise, be baptized, and be cleansed from thy sins while thou invokest his name.' Here the baptism and the cleansing from sin are to be secured by prayer, and 'while' the prayer is being made."

Etheridge's translation of the Syriac renders the passage in question as follows: "Arise, and baptize, and be washed from thy sins while thou callest his name." It is clear, therefore, that Paul's baptism was a baptism that he secured or invoked upon him-

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\* "Christic Baptism," pp. 106-107.



self by prayer, and not water baptism, performed by Ananias.

But though we should regard it water baptism, the language of the text does not make the baptism to "wash away sins." Alexander Campbell has given us the key to the proper interpretation of the text, in his remarks on Matt. xxviii, 19:\* "To this I have not found an exception. For example, 'cleanse the house, sweeping it,' 'cleanse the garment, washing it,' shows the manner in which the command is to be obeyed, or explains the meaning of it. Thus, 'disciple the nations, immersing them.' Does Acts xxii, 16, prove an exception to this rule of construction? 'Wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.' 'For it shall come to pass, that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.'"† It is very plain, therefore, that the conditional cause of the washing away of sin is "calling on the name of the Lord," which is the expression of faith in him; and by this we are baptized into Christ, and by this baptism our sins are washed away—a baptism that comes by the prayer of faith. Hence Paul's baptism through prayer was a baptism of the Holy Ghost.

But Paul gives an account of his commission in Acts xxvi, 16–18: "But rise and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, both of these

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\* "Christian System," p. 198. † Acts ii, 21; Rom. x, 13.



things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, to open their eyes and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me."

It will be observed, that although this commission is more extensive and explicit than that given to the other eleven apostles, yet there is not one word said about water baptism. If water baptism occupies the eminent place that Campbell claims it does in the plan of salvation, as the act of inducting the sinner into the kingdom of God, into the pardon of sin; and if it is to be to him the evidence of this blessed relation; in other words, if, as Campbell claims, it is conversion itself,—is it not singular that no mention whatever is made of it here? Furthermore, according to this scheme of doctrine, it is the *act* of faith—the *last act of faith* upon which pardon or remission of sin is predicated. It therefore should be mentioned as explicitly as *faith* is mentioned in the text. It is clear, therefore, that Paul received no commission to baptize people "*into the remission of sins.*"

There is still something more explicit from the apostle on this matter of water baptism than its omission from his commission as the great apostle of the Gentiles. In 1 Cor. i, 14–17, he especially disclaims

being sent to baptize, and puts in striking antithesis preaching the gospel and baptizing, saying: "I thank God I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius, lest any should say I had baptized in my own name. . . . For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." Does this language comport at all with the idea that Paul had himself been saved by water baptism; and also with the idea that water baptism is essential to salvation? It must be remembered that Paul was the founder of this Church. He says, 1 Cor. ix, 1: "Are ye not my work in the Lord?" Chapter xv, 10: "But I labored more abundantly than they all;" yet, according to this theory, he had converted only a very few.

More specifically, as to his declaration that he was not sent "to baptize but to preach the gospel," how can any one preach the gospel of salvation to sinners, and yet not give baptism a prominent place, if Campbellism is the true doctrine? It does not fairly meet the issue to say that the person who preaches the gospel need not necessarily be charged with the administration of baptism. Paul was sent unto the Gentiles that they "might receive forgiveness of sins." To hundreds and thousands of them he was the first gospel preacher. If he was not sent to baptize, he was inadequately commissioned for his great missionary work. No, the plain and obvious truth is, that, in the estimation of the apostle, water baptism was something that could be administered by the disciples

when the believers were organized into Churches. With Paul it was only an outward profession, a Churchly rite, that had its proper place in the visible Church, but was not an essential to the remission of sins.

The fact that the apostles and their co-laborers were accustomed, according to the accounts given in the Acts of the Apostles, to baptize immediately those who professed faith in Christ, is often adduced as proof that baptism was regarded by them as essential to the remission of sins. Against this inference there lie several unanswerable objections. These were baptisms after the divine acceptance had been manifested, as in the case of the household of Cornelius, Lydia and her household, the Philippian jailer and all his house, and, in one other instance, a baptism where the individual was still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity," as in the case of Simon the sorcerer (Acts, viii); and baptism where the persons had already been baptized, as in the case of the disciples at Ephesus. (Acts xix.)

The case of the household of Cornelius has been very thoroughly considered already. As to Lydia's case, we are specifically told (Acts xvi, 14) that the Lord "opened her heart, that she attended unto the things spoken by Paul." In other words, God's Spirit set the divine seal on her devotion and faith. As to the Philippian jailer, subsequent facts indicate that he did just what the apostle told him, in verse 31, to do, "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ."

The case of Simon the sorcerer is one of peculiar difficulty for Campbellism, for Simon had all the faith this system requires. "He believed and was baptized." (Verse 13.) Yet he was still "in the gall of bitterness and in the bond of iniquity." It is assumed by the advocates of this doctrine that he had backslidden in the intervening time; but there is not one particle of proof of it. Simon was not a penitent believer when he was baptized, and therefore, according to Campbellism, was not baptized at all; and therefore Peter should have commanded him to repent and be baptized.

The case of the disciples found by Paul at Ephesus, the account of which is given in Acts xix, 1-6, presents still more insuperable difficulties for the system: 1. They were disciples (verse 1). As such they were, according to Campbell, accepted of God and saved. 2. They had believed (verse 2). 3. They had been baptized (verse 3.) 4. They were baptized again with Christian baptism (verse 5). Now, if John's baptism was unto remission of sins, as Campbell and his followers claim, and if Christian baptism is for the same purpose, here is a clear example of persons being baptized twice for the same purpose, and the second baptism administered without their having backslidden—they were "disciples." Either John's baptism was not in order to remission of sins, or Christian baptism is not for such purpose,

or neither is for such purpose. And the last is without question true.

The way in which they seek to avoid this dilemma is to assert that these persons were baptized by John's baptism some years after the inauguration of the Christian dispensation. This is squarely contradicted by the apostle's declaration in verse 4: "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after, that is, on Christ Jesus." If they had not been baptized by John, why this reference to the baptizing of John and his personal preaching? The shortest method on the supposition above would have been to tell them that John's baptism was not valid after Pentecost. No; this inference is a sheer gratuity. These were John's disciples, a portion of that immense number that came to John's baptism, and had truly repented at his preaching, and like other Jews had found their way up here to Ephesus.

While baptism usually was administered immediately by the apostles to their converts, the facts are that, in all instances recorded, there is something in the context indicating that the baptism was not performed as a condition to the remission of sins. The Philippian jailer is a typical example. If he obeyed the apostle's mandate, he was saved by faith, and baptized afterward.

## CHAPTER IX.

## BAPTISM INTO DEATH, INTO CHRIST, AND BAPTISMAL WASHINGS.

THERE are certain forms of expression in the epistolary writings of the New Testament Scriptures that the advocates of this scheme of doctrine make use of in a peculiar and somewhat novel sense; as, for example, "in Christ" is the baptized state; baptism into water is baptism "into Christ;" baptism into death is baptism by water, or rather into water, into the remission of sins; and, of course, "buried by baptism" means immersion.

Mr. Braden presents these their ideas to the best advantage in the briefest compass.\* "We are said to be separated from our sins, or the old man, in baptism, and so put on the new man. (Rom.vi; Col. ii.) . . . Again, Christ is the door to his Church or kingdom. How do we come into Christ, or enter into this pardoned state? By baptism. (Gal. ii, 27.) Again, we are said to be justified by the name of Christ. (1 Cor. vi, 11.) We put on his name, and have his name called on us in baptism."

The fallacy in this statement consists in the fact

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\* "Hughey and Braden Debate," p. 236.



that false assumptions are made with reference to two important points: First, that water baptism is here referred to primarily; and, second, that baptism into Christ and into the name of Christ are one and the same thing.

Let us give close attention to the Scripture language of Rom. vi, 3, 4: "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 from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." In the first place, let it be noted that baptism *into* Christ is one thing, and baptism *into the name of Christ* quite another. The Scriptures never confound these two. The first introduces us into the blessings of salvation. The second introduces us into visible covenant relation with Christ. The first is an experience; the second is a mere outward profession. Baptism into Christ is baptism by the Holy Ghost; baptism into the name of Christ is baptism with water. (Matt. xxviii, 19; Acts xix, 5.) This is fully illustrated by its ancient Old Testament counterpart, circumcision. Rom. ii, 28, 29: "For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision which is outward in the flesh; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God." Put beside this

language of the apostle the parallel passage found in Col. ii, 11, 12: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." "Outward circumcision" distinguished a Jew nationally, physically; "circumcision of the heart" distinguished a true child of Abraham. So outward baptism distinguishes a Christian by profession; but spiritual baptism distinguishes him as a real child of God.

Every reasonable student of the Scriptures must admit that the apostle is his own best interpreter, and that what he has said upon this subject must be interpreted in consistency. He must not be made to contradict himself. In 1 Cor. xii, 13, he sets forth specifically the baptism to which he attributes a saving power and efficacy: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Let it be observed that this is a formulated doctrinal statement of a universal character. "Jews and Gentiles," "bond and free," certainly comprise all the race of men without distinction. And again, note the fact that the baptism is specifically defined as "by one Spirit," and that this baptism inducts into "one body," which

is Christ. Now place beside this Rom. vi, 3: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Now, how can these two propositions be true, and baptism in the one instance be by water, and in the other be by the Holy Ghost?

The very striking character of the metaphorical language here used ought to prevent the careful student of this Scripture from considering the baptism here mentioned water baptism. First, it is "into Christ;" second, it is *into his death*; and third, *into death*. Is it in consonance with reason to attribute to a mere outward rite such an all-embracing spiritual influence?

But further light is thrown upon it by the parallel passage in Col. ii, 11, 12. Baptism is here designated as "circumcision made without hands," "the circumcision of Christ." It is evident that baptism and circumcision as physical facts have no similarity. Their similarity must be in signification. But the apostle tells us, Rom ii, 28, 29, that the circumcision of Christ is a spiritual circumcision. A "circumcision made without hands" must be spiritual, in the very nature of the case. Then again, we are also told that the burial and resurrection is "through faith of the operation of God;" that is, faith in us, and, because of this, wrought by the Divine Spirit. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." We fail to conceive how the inspiring Spirit could have more

completely hedged about these passages to prevent men from exalting a mere rite into a saving instrumentality.

It is sought to break the force of this chain of argument by giving an exceedingly novel interpretation or rendering to 1 Cor. xii, 13. We are gravely told that ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι—"by one Spirit"—should be rendered "by the authority of one Spirit."\* We give this individual credit for seeing the difficulty in the way of the theory, else it is impossible to conceive why any one should resort to such methods of exegetical torture and such special pleading to save his case. When he undertakes to give such a rendering of the passage, he drags bodily the word *authority* into the text. In every passage in the Scriptures where baptism by the Spirit or by the Holy Ghost is spoken of, the phraseology is ἐν πνεύματι. What nonsense to attempt to translate ἐν by the words "by the authority of," as, for example, Acts i, 5: "Ye shall be baptized by [the authority of] the Holy Ghost not many days hence." Again, Christian baptism is not administered "by the authority of the Holy Ghost," but by the command of Christ. No, this is a mere makeshift to get rid of the force of an unanswerable argument. Paul clearly defines what baptism into Christ is in 1 Cor. xii, 13.

Closely related to the above argument in method

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\* Browder's "Pulpit," p. 77.

and ideas, is an argument predicated on the words, "one baptism," in Eph. iv, 5. It is maintained that the unity of the baptism consists in the one purpose for which it was instituted, namely, remission of sins. As already has been shown, there is but "one baptism," but that baptism is spiritual baptism. "By one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." It may be asked, What, then, do you do with water baptism? It is but the symbol of baptism. Jesus said of the bread of the eucharistic feast, "Take, eat, this is my body," and of the cup, "This is my blood," while he only meant, This symbolizes or represents my body, my blood. So water, properly administered represents baptism, the "one baptism" of purification from sin; baptism by "one Spirit" into "one body," which is Christ. Rom. vi, 3, 4; Col. ii, 11, 12; 1 Cor. xii, 13; Eph. iv, 3-6, all refer to one and the same baptism, the baptism of the Holy Ghost.

Eph. v, 25, 26, is another passage that is uniformly presented by them as teaching baptismal remission. "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." In order to make this to teach the doctrine, it is necessary to assume that the phrase "washing of water" refers to baptism, and that this "washing of water" is a figurative expression for the remission of sins.

Now, in the first place, regardless of the ordinary



interpretation given this by commentators, we claim there is no sufficient ground for believing that water baptism is at all referred to in the passage. Cleansing by water, when baptism is out of the question, is a characteristic Scriptural figure. Psalm li, 7: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Ezek. xxxvi, 25: "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." John xiii, 10: "He that is washed, needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit." Now, in all these instances cleansing by water is referred to, and yet no one pretends to give the passages a physical import. The washing of water stands for and represents spiritual cleansing; but it is certainly straining the figure out of all reason to make it teach that the Church is actually washed from sin by the physical washing of water.

But is it not claiming rather much for water baptism to have it accomplish all this cleansing is said to accomplish in verse 27: "That he might present it to himself a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing?" Truly that would be a wonderful achievement secured by dipping a person once under the water. How are backsliders cleansed in this Church? for, according to Campbellism, they belong to the kingdom. Certainly their former cleansing will not suffice for subsequent uncleanness; yet they, according to the theory, belong to this spotless



Church. But Campbellism teaches that it is the sinner that is cleansed by baptism. The promise here made is with reference to the Church.

In 1 Cor. vi, 11, we have clearly defined the agency by which the Church is purified or cleansed: "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." Here the "washing and sanctifying" spoken of in Eph. v, 26, are said to be accomplished by the Spirit. If by the Spirit, then not by water. But we have from the Master himself a complete and convincing definition of this term water, John vii, 38, 39: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly" (or from within him) "shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spoke of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive."

Again, cleansing is spoken of in Heb. x, 20: "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." It needs but a glance to see that cleansing from the defilement of sin is attributed to sprinkling, and if physical sprinkling is referred to, it will at once dispose of immersion baptism. On the other hand, if *washing* refers to baptism, it only cleanses the body, not the soul, not the heart—the sprinkling cleanses that. It is very obvious, therefore, that moral or spiritual cleansing is not secured by the performance of a mere rite. It will no doubt be said by these teachers, "We do not

mean that the water washes away sins." If so, then the language that attributes spiritual cleansing to water is figurative. If figurative, which is the most reasonable figure—that it stands for baptism as a condition to the pardon of sin, or that it represents the cleansing influence of divine grace in the Holy Spirit? Unquestionably the latter, for the Lord himself has defined the figure, again and again, in accordance therewith.

An attempt is often made to draft into the service of this doctrine Titus iii, 5: "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." The marvel is that they should attempt to adduce the text in support of their theory, for it is scarcely possible to find a more positive contradiction of their fundamental tenet—justification by works. The text first shows that man is not saved by his own works. Now, baptism is either a work of righteousness, or it is not. If it is, it does not save us, for this is especially excluded by the text. If it is not, in what category shall we place it? It is always one of the "works" when they come to interpret James ii, 24. To this inconsistency does this theory of positive institutes drive them.

In the second place, the salvation which is denied to our acts, is attributed to God's grace or "mercy." This "mercy" is made manifest to us, and applied by

him, "by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." The "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" is God's work, not man's, in any sense; neither the penitent's individual act, nor that of another person. Mark the words: This salvation is of the "mercy" of the Father, "through" the mediation of the Son, "by" the efficient agency of the Holy Ghost. The relative *οἷ*, which, can not agree with *ἀνακαινώσεως*, *renewing*; it may agree with *λουτροῦ*, *washing*, or with *Πνεύματος ἁγίου*, *Holy Ghost*, in the neuter gender. "Which" Holy Ghost in his washing and renewing power "he shed on us abundantly," is the thought indicated by the grammatical structure of the text.

In like manner, Gal. iii, 27, is interpreted to harmonize with the dogma, "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ, have put on Christ." The similarity in thought and expression in this passage to those already quoted—as notably Rom. vi, 3, 4; Col. ii, 11, 12; 1 Cor. xii, 13—if properly considered, will lead to its just interpretation. Baptism *into* Christ is baptism by the Holy Ghost, as has already been shown. "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." If done by the Spirit, it can not be done by water. What right any one has to read the text, "For as many of us as have been baptized [by water] into Christ, have put on Christ," is past comprehension to any one who takes into consideration the real import of the term *baptism*.

But the verse immediately preceding the text sets forth the condition fulfilled by us, by which we become children of God: "For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus." If faith makes us children of God, then baptism by water does not make us such. In other words, if we are "children of God by faith," baptism, which comes subsequently, does not have any part in the matter. But baptism here spoken of is the divine act, not ours. The context here is exactly similar to the language of 1 Cor. xii, 13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free." Gal. iii, 27, 28: "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Is it possible that one of these cases is a manifestation of the effect of water baptism, while the other is the effect of spiritual baptism? Or is identically the same thing accomplished by the water that is accomplished by the Spirit? The very reasonable rule, that an author must be interpreted in consistency with himself, divests this dogma of all support from the teachings of the great apostle to the Gentiles. The apostle did not attribute the same results to physical means that he did to spiritual; the same effect to a mere rite that belonged to the agency and power of the Holy Ghost. That he attributed

induction into Christ to the baptism of the Spirit, can not for one moment be questioned.

Eliminate from the whole attempt at argument the false assumptions on which it is predicated, and you have absolutely nothing left. The assumptions are: 1. Whenever baptism is spoken of, unless it is specifically defined as by the Spirit, water baptism is meant. 2. Baptism into Christ is baptism by water, notwithstanding the apostle affirms the contrary. 3. Washing, as applied to baptism, means the washing away of sin, which, however, is to be considered figurative enough to get rid of physical washing, and make it only become a metaphorical expression for the remission of sins by baptism; that is, "the washing of regeneration" means the washing of *justification* or pardon.

## CHAPTER X.

## SALVATION BY BAPTISM, BY WORKS, BY "OBEDIENCE OF FAITH."

PETER, to whom, according to this scheme of doctrine, the keys of the kingdom were given, and who, on the day of Pentecost, opened its doors and laid down its constitution for all subsequent ages, is claimed to have set forth the saving efficacy of baptism by water in his first epistle to the general Church, ch. iii, 21: "The like figure whereunto 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." On this passage Campbell says:\* "But Peter strongly maintains his Pentecostal address. He says, speaking of Noah's salvation in water, and by water, that we are saved in water, and by water, as Noah, in the ark, was saved through the Deluge, to which salvation, neither to the ark nor to the water alone, baptism corresponds as an antitype to a type, in saving those who enter the water, as Noah entered the Deluge, relying on God's promises." These ideas are with marked uniformity voiced by all the disciples

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\* "Campbell and Rice," p. 558.



of Campbell. They all, in the same confused way, set forth at one time the water of the Deluge, and at another the ark on the water, as the type of the salvation the sinner secures in or through the water of baptism. They also all agree in interpreting the word ἐπερώτημα ("answer") as signifying the requirement or condition\* of a good conscience, meaning in order to a good conscience. And they variously interpret "the putting away of the filth of the flesh" as the washing away of physical filth, and then again the removal of ceremonial uncleanness.† There is a want of agreement even in the same writer, as for example Dungan.

The passage in question is one quite difficult of interpretation, and it is not to be marveled at that there should be disagreement in interpretation; but it is not a little marvelous that there should be such confident dogmatizing founded upon this passage as that manifested by Mr. Campbell and his followers. On the other hand, it has been as positively cited as proving that baptism does not save us in any but a symbolical sense. It does not "put away the filth of the flesh," but is simply the answer that a good conscience gives to the fact of a salvation already secured through faith in Christ.

But it seems possible to the writer to give an interpretation which will make the apparent conflict

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\* Braden, in "Hughey and Braden's Debate," p. 259.

† D. R. Dungan, "On the Rock," pp. 195 and 333.

between the principal and parenthetical clauses to coalesce into harmony. The whole matter turns on the signification attached to  $\psi^{\tau}$  *και*. If we construe it as referring to the word  $\psi\delta\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$  (water,) and adopt the conjectural reading of some critics, substituting  $\delta$  for  $\psi^{\tau}$ , then there will be some ground for the generally received interpretation that the passage refers to baptism by water. But if we construe  $\psi^{\tau}$  *και* in connection with the word  $\Pi\nu\epsilon\upsilon\mu\alpha\tau\iota$  (Spirit), which is found in verse 18, the whole difficulty is at once removed: "For Christ once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit [ $\psi^{\tau}$  *και*], *by which also* he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; which sometimes were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved [ $\delta\iota$   $\psi\delta\alpha\tau\omicron\varsigma$ ] through the water, [ $\psi^{\tau}$  *και*]. *By which* [Spirit] *also* baptism, the antitype, now saves us (not of the flesh, the putting away of filth, but <sup>the</sup> the answer to God of a good conscience) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." With one exception, the rendering above follows the Greek construction; baptism is placed before antitype.

If we construe the relative as referring to the word *water* in the preceding verse, and substitute the reading  $\delta$  for  $\psi^{\tau}$ , we have this absurdity, that the apostle represents the water of the flood as the medium of salvation, while in fact it was the medium of destruc-

tion, and Noah and his family were saved through it by the ark. Baptism is not the antitype of the Flood, but of the ark; and if this be so, and it can not well be questioned, the relative does not therefore refer to *the water*. If it does not, it must refer to the Holy Spirit. The apostle declares that Jesus was "quickened [or raised from the dead] by the Spirit," verse 18. And in verse 21 our attention is again called to his resurrection, as to our being saved through it by baptism. "The antitype baptism doth also now save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." In other words, as Christ was raised from the dead by the Spirit, we, by the same Spirit in baptism, are saved through the resurrection of Christ.

How water baptism can save us by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, is past all comprehension. The advocates of exclusive immersion think that baptism was designed to represent a burial and resurrection; but to say that baptism saves us by a representation of the resurrection of Jesus Christ, only covers part of their idea as to what baptism represents, and does not make a very lucid exposition of the passage. And yet this is the only conceivable exposition that can be given from their stand-point.

In order to make clear our view of the teaching of this difficult passage—not difficult because it offers any support to Campbellism, but because of the apparent conflict between the parenthetical clause and the principal sentence—we will give a free paraphrase of

it: "By which Spirit also, baptism, the antitype of the ark, now saves us (not of the flesh, the putting away of ceremonial taint, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) through the resurrection of Jesus Christ." It will be seen that the baptism spoken of is spiritual baptism, which saves, but not in putting away ceremonial taint, as Jewish purifications and baptisms were supposed to do, but the response of a good conscience to God—that is, the witness of a good conscience to God—through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Attention has several times been called to the fact that the fundamental tenet of Campbellism is a system of justification by works. In support of this doctrine, an extensive use is made of the language of St. James, chapter ii, 21–14: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered up Isaac, his son, upon the altar? Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled, which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness, and he was called the Friend of God. Ye see how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." It is at once assumed that James is speaking of the justification of the sinner—justification in the sense of the pardon of sin, and then in order to make the plural "works," in addition to faith, repentance, confession, and baptism are each styled a work. Of course, all this proceeds upon the unscrip-

tural theory that repentance comes after faith, and that an oral confession of "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," is required as a part of the condition.

The justification of which St. James is speaking, is the justification or approval of the child of God, long subsequent to his justification as a penitent sinner, and his adoption into the family of God. Let it not be forgotten that the question is, What must a sinner do to be saved? not what the child of God must do to retain the divine favor. The language of St. James taken in its entirety shows that he is speaking of faith and works in a Christian. Verses 14-17: "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith and have not works? Can faith save him? If a brother or sister be naked and destitute of daily food, and one of *you* say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled, notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body, what doth it profit? Even so, faith if it hath not works is dead, being alone." The words "brethren," a "brother or sister," and "one of you," clearly indicate that the apostle is speaking of the faith and good works of Christians, and not of penitent sinners. Duties are constantly required of Christians that are not required of penitent sinners as conditions to pardon. The works indicated here are works of charity, and not confession, repentance, baptism; and logical consistency requires those who claim that the apostle teaches that good



works are necessary to pardon of sin, to show just what and how many are the works required.

But the verses ordinarily cited—verses 21–24—simply set forth Abraham's justification as a servant of the Most High, about twenty-two years after the time that the Scriptures said, "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." When was Abraham justified by works? When he offered up Isaac. (Verse 21.) When was his faith counted unto him for righteousness? When he believed God's promise made to him in Haran. All that can be made out of the passage, to give any color of support to the dogma, is contained in the expression, "a man"—"Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only." The expression is construed to mean the sinner, notwithstanding the example under contemplation is righteous Abraham, after long years of faithfulness. When "Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness," what was the work he then performed? According to Campbell's terminology, what was the act of faith?

If Campbell's interpretation of this passage is correct, then there is a positive contradiction here of what Paul teaches in Rom. iv, 2, 3: "For if Abraham were justified by works, he had whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness." See also the rest of the chapter, and chapter iii, 19–31; Gal. ii, 16, and iii, 6–11. These



passages, with an invincible clearness, evince that Abraham was justified by faith without works, and that the sinner is so justified; but it is plain that Paul is talking of another justification from James. Paul is treating of the pardon of the sinner, James of the subsequent approval of the righteous.

This is the only reasonable method of reconciling James and Paul. It is customary with these teachers to ridicule the idea that a reconciliation is necessary; but when compelled to attempt one in order to vindicate their scheme of doctrine from the charge that the Scriptures are brought by them into conflict (for Paul says Abraham was justified by faith without works, and James says he was justified by faith and works; and here is conflict if both mean justification in the same sense), they say that Paul is talking about justification under the law of Moses, and James of justification under the Christian dispensation.\* Mr. Braden, when pressed by Dr. Hughey on this point, says: "Let us look at Paul's argument. He had proved that neither Jew or Gentile could be saved by their works, for one had not lived up to the light of nature, and the other had not kept the Jewish law. How were they to be saved? By faith in Christ, without the deeds of obedience to the law of nature or the Jewish law. 'But,' says the Jew, 'how can he justify a man without obedience to the Mosaic law?' 'Why,' says Paul,

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\* Braden in debate with Hughey, p. 252.

‘he justified Abraham without obedience to this law before the law was given, for the law was not given. In like manner he has done away with the law now, and he justifies men after the law, without the deeds of the law, as he did before the law.’ ”

It is the broadest possible stretch of charity to call this an explanation or a reconciliation. It is an assumption without any proof whatever, that the apostle is treating of the impossibility of the Jews and Gentiles being justified, the one under the law of nature, and the other under the Jewish law, because neither had kept the law. Those who were justified, of either Jews or heathen, were either justified by faith without works, or by faith and works. If Jews were justified without obedience to the Jewish law, as Mr. Braden says, then the theory of Campbellism, that the Jews were justified by obedience to positive institutes, falls to the ground.

Equally groundless is the assumption that Paul is showing (Romans iii and iv) the impossibility of Abraham’s justification by the law, because it had not yet been given. There is not one word said in the whole of the apostle’s argument about the law of Moses, or any law given by Moses. The law of circumcision is the only law mentioned, and this is mentioned in order to exclude it from any part in Abraham’s justification. “Deeds of the law” and “works” mean the same thing, and comprehend all acts of obedience whether by Jew or Gentile, and are ex-

cluded from having to do with "the remission of sins that are past." (Verse 25.) And when the apostle sums up the argument in chapter iii, 28-30, he makes it as clear as a sunbeam that he is treating of justification under the gospel. "Therefore, we conclude that a man is justified by faith, without the deeds of the law. Is he the God of the Jews only? Is he not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also. Seeing that it is one God which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and the uncircumcision through faith." Jews and Gentiles are justified by faith without works, now and for all time. The justification spoken of is a present tense and a future justification, and is emphatically without works. When Mr. Braden says, "Paul nowhere teaches that either saint or sinner can be justified by faith alone without works or obedience to the law of Christ," he asserts that which squarely contradicts the facts; for Paul asserts that truth in the passages under consideration, and does it in the very words of this denial, in Gal. ii, 16, Revised Version: "Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, save [marginal reading, 'but only'] through faith in Jesus Christ." Notice, "a man"—not a Jew, but *a man*, any man—is not justified "by works of the law," present tense, thereby indicating its universal application. Therefore Paul is treating of the justification of the penitent sinner, under the Christian dispensation, and he declares it is not by works; and if James is speaking of the same

thing, there is a square contradiction between them, and no jugglery with words will get rid of it. That must be a false scheme of doctrine that will put the inspired writers into contradiction.

Again, the inconsistency of Campbell and his disciples in claiming the "works" spoken of by St. James as grounds of justification in the sense of pardon, is seen in this, that they mean in reality but *one* work. "The obedience of faith," "obeying the gospel," and "obeying that form of doctrine," are expressions with them that mean but one thing. Campbell says: \* "That it is not faith, but an act resulting from faith, which changes our state." Note "*an act*" singular. After quoting Rom, i, 5; x, 8; xvi, 26; 1 Thess. i, 8; 1 Peter iv, 17; Acts, vi, 7—passages in which the expressions "obedience of faith" and "obeying the gospel" occur—he says: † "From these sayings it is unquestionably plain that either the Gospel itself, taken as a whole, is a command, or that in it there is a command, through the obedience of which salvation is enjoyed." Further on he says: "This act is sometimes called immersion." It is plain, therefore, that they mean but one work as the "obedience of faith." If this be so, then the quotation of St. James proves that we are justified by *acts of faith*, and not *an act of faith*, as Campbell teaches.

But do these phrases—"obedience of faith," "obey-

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\* "Christian System," p. 193. † *Id.* p. 192.

ing the gospel," and "obeying that form of doctrine"—mean baptism? Let us take a few passages as samples. Rom. i, 5: "By whom we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for his name." Substituting baptism for "obedience to the faith," will make manifest the absurdity. "By whom we have received grace and apostleship for baptism among all nations." 1 Peter iv, 17: "What shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel [are not baptized]?" Rom. vi, 17: "But ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine [baptism] which was delivered unto you." Well may the reader exclaim, What nonsense! but it is the nonsense of the theory. "The obedience of faith" is all manner of obedience springing from faith; and it is Christian fidelity that it defines, and not the conditions the sinner performs in order to his salvation. "Form of doctrine," *τύπος*, *type*, example, or pattern; therefore pattern of Christian teaching in general. It requires a fertile imagination to convert *διδασκαλίας*, doctrine, into immersion, or *τύπος διδασκαλίας* into immersion, and yet this is what the theory does every time this passage is cited as having reference to baptism. Water baptism may be a *τύπος*, type of Holy Ghost baptism; but it reaches the very superlative of absurdity to call water baptism a type of doctrine.

## CHAPTER XI.

## CAMPBELL'S SEVEN CAUSES OF JUSTIFICATION.

IN order to refute the evangelical doctrine of justification by faith alone, that is, by faith without works, Campbell and his followers are wont to call attention to the fact that justification is ascribed in the Scriptures to seven different causes; namely, \* *faith* (Rom. v, 1), *grace* (Rom. iii, 24), *by his blood* (Rom. v, 9), *works* (James ii, 21), *in or by the name of the Lord Jesus* (1 Cor. vi, 11), *by Christ* (Gal. ii, 16), *by knowledge* (Isa. liii, 11). Five of these so-called *causes* of justification are simply one cause—the meritorious cause of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and this leaves but *faith* and *works* as possible causes of justification. All this confusion is removed when we consider that the question of controversy is only about the conditional cause of the justification of the sinner, and nothing else. It is not what Christ has done, what the Father has done, or what the Holy Ghost has done or must do, but what must the sinner do as a condition to pardon or justification. And where Mr. Campbell says, “He that selects faith out of seven must either act arbitrarily or show his reason; but the

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\* “Christian System,” p. 247.



reason does not appear in the text. . . . Why, then, assume that faith *alone* is the reason of our justification?" he either misapprehends the whole question, or is trying to confuse the matter in the minds of his readers. There are but two of these seven causes that with any show of reason whatever can be called a condition, and one of these two "works" is especially excluded by the apostle Paul in Rom. chapters iii and iv, and Gal. ii, 16, and iii, 6-11. If any one should assert that *faith alone* is the cause meritorious, efficacious, and conditional of the sinner's justification, Mr. Campbell would have some reason for this objection; but all that is claimed is, that *faith alone* is the conditional cause, or the condition upon which justification is granted to the sinner.

The writer once had a discussion of three days with a disciple of Alexander Campbell, on the subject of justification, and although the proposition was, "Faith in Christ is the only condition necessary to the justification of the penitent sinner," yet each time his respondent spoke he insisted that "Faith alone," in the terms of the proposition, meant faith without repentance, without grace, without the blood of Christ, etc., through the entire catalogue, according to Campbell. The only conceivable reason for this persistent misrepresentation of the issue is, that baptism may be brought in under "works" as a cause of the sinner's justification.

All that Mr. Campbell has to say about "moving,"

“efficient,” “procuring,” “disposing,” “formal,” “immediate,” and “concurring” causes is so much in the direction of confusing a plain issue, What is the condition, or what are the conditions, if he so prefers it, performed upon the part of the penitent sinner to secure justification, pardon of sin, or salvation? Campbell and his disciples say, confession and immersion. Other evangelical Christians say, faith alone—mark now the plain proposition—to the penitent sinner, faith in Christ, and nothing else, is the conditional cause of his justification.

As the interpretation of the Scriptural term, justification is bent to suit the demands of this scheme of doctrine, so repentance is given a signification different from that usually given to it by evangelical expositors. Mr. Campbell defines repentance as \* “sorrow for sin,” and further says: “Genuine repentance does not always issue in reformation. Judas was sorrowful even unto death, but could not reform. Many have been so genuinely sorry for their sins as to become suicides. Speak we of a ‘godly sorrow?’ No, this is not to be expected from unconverted and ungodly persons. Christians, Paul teaches, when they err, may repent with a godly sorrow; but this is not to be expected from the unregenerate or from those who have not reformed.”

These ideas have the merit of originality, if nothing

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\* “Christian System,” p. 255.

else. "Godly sorrow" is the sorrow of a baptized person, for that is what he means by a Christian. It would be difficult to distinguish any more godly qualities about the sincere sorrow of a baptized person, than that of one who had never been baptized. It is to be inferred, if "godly sorrow" in 2 Cor. vii, 10, is the sorrow of a baptized person, then "the sorrow of the world" must be the sorrow of an unbaptized person; but it is sadly to be observed that such a sorrow, according to the apostle, "worketh death," never salvation.

But Mr. Campbell claims that *μετάνοια*, uniformly rendered repentance, means reformation;\* and he furthermore claims that *reformation* † "represents the whole process of what is figuratively called *regeneration*." It then follows that if "godly sorrow" worketh reformation, it works confession and baptism, for these are parts of the process of reformation or regeneration, according to this teacher. He also says that the multitudes who on the day of Pentecost asked, "What shall we do?" "had already repented, they were sorry for the past;" "had changed their minds," and were commanded to reform. But Mr. Campbell said, "'Godly sorrow' is the sorrow of Christians alone;" but "godly sorrow" worketh *μετάνοιαν*, repentance—according to Campbell, reformation—that is to say, that the sorrow of the Chris-

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\* "Christian System," p. 258. † *Id.* p. 259.

tian works regeneration, and regeneration is the whole process of reformation, repentance, confession, baptism. Such is the inevitable confusion that results from this man's ideas concerning repentance.

Reformation and regeneration are not the same thing, neither is *μετάνοια* the unvarying equivalent of reformation. It is properly translated repentance, and includes in its meaning ordinarily genuine sorrow, honest confession of sin, and an earnest effort of heart to turn from sin.

But this doctrine of repentance and reformation is a part of a fabric. Leave it out, and its consistency as a theory is not maintained. Regeneration must be made the equivalent of reformation in order to make it reach its consummation in water baptism. In other words, regeneration must be made the individual's work alone, in order that it may be nothing more than a reformation wrought out by sorrow for sin, confession of Christ, and baptism. For if regeneration is anything more than this, if it is a work wrought out by the Spirit of God, then water baptism, as the so-called "bath of regeneration," does not consummate the new birth, and its efficacy as a condition to salvation is at once set aside. That is to say, if regeneration is spiritual, the witness to it must be the Holy Spirit, and it would be inconvenient to deny the claims of the unimmersed people to the witness of the Spirit.

Mr. Campbell seems to have had quite a fancy for

the phrase, "bath of regeneration,"\* as a translation of the Greek *λουτροῦ παλιγγενεσίας* ("washing of regeneration"), Titus iii, 5; and he says this is the equivalent of being born of water. But this, like all of his other modifications of the Received Version, is a modification in the interest of a theory. He says: "The bath of regeneration means the water used for regenerating a person."† The word *λουτρόν* occurs but twice in the New Testament, and in both of these cases is rendered *washing* by the translators of the Authorized Version and by the Revisers. It is true the Revisers have put the word *laver* in the margin as a possible rendering of the word. But the Septuagint uses *λουτήρ* for the containing vessel, and not *λουτρόν*. This, however, is a matter of but little moment. Campbell's idea is that *λουτροῦ* here stands for the element in which regeneration is wrought; but this is a sheer assumption. "*Washing*," in this text, defines a process as much as "*renewing*." We have a similar form of phraseology in the fifty-first Psalm: "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." Is it reasonable that, in the case in question, one of these expressions should define the element in which, and the other the process by which? The plain fact is, that regeneration is accomplished by "washing" and "renewing" of the Holy Ghost shed on us. Again,

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\* "Christian System," p. 263. *Id.* p. 268.

“the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost” are put in antithesis to “works of righteousness which we have done.” Now, baptism is certainly a work of righteousness “*which we have done;*” if so, it is in antithesis to this so-called “bath of regeneration,” and can not be the same thing.

In the same way Mr. Campbell attempts to handle the phrase “pure water,” in Heb. x, 22. He tells us that “pure water” is a metonymy for “cleansing or washing of water.” “‘Having your bodies washed with pure water,’ or water that purifies or cleanses.”\* *Καθαρός*, pure, occurs twenty-eight times in the New Testament, and not in one single instance does it define any thing else than the quality of the noun with which it agrees. *Καθαρῶ ὕδατι* means “pure water,” and not water which cleanses. It is the most gratuitous assumption imaginable that attempts to attach a morally cleansing efficacy to this *clean water*. The moral, or rather spiritual, cleansing is wrought by the “sprinkling,” because this is of the heart, and it is a sprinkling from an evil conscience. Sprinkling stands for cleansing; as, for example, “the blood of sprinkling.” “Purge [sprinkle] me with hyssop.”

But all this is in consonance with Mr. Campbell’s theory of the new birth or regeneration. Water is the mother, according to him, out of which the Christian is born. He says, † in commenting on John iii, 5:

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\* “Christian System,” p. 265. † *Id.* p. 201.



“So in every place where water and the Spirit, or water and the Word, are spoken of, *the water stands first*. Every child is born of its father when it is born of its mother. Hence the Savior put the mother first, and the apostles follow him.” It has been facetiously remarked “that it is not marvelous that these people have so much to say about water, for it is natural that children should think well of their mother.” But is there one word in the Scriptures to support this odd notion? Did Jesus, in the conversation with Nicodemus, give the remotest hint of any such a thing? He only mentioned this so-called mother once; and subsequently, when he had occasion to compare the new birth and the natural birth, he made no mention of the water. “That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit.” But Mr. Campbell says:\* “The Spirit of God is the begetter; the gospel is the seed.” It follows, by the analogy that he is carrying out, that the Spirit’s office is fulfilled in regeneration before the new birth takes place. Hence the Savior placed these two agencies of the new birth in wrong relation to each other—a relation contrary to fact. It should have been “born of the Spirit and of the water.” But his theory will not permit him to put being born of the Spirit where the Master puts it, after being born of the water; for if he so does, a man is not born again when

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\* “Christian System,” p. 201.

he is baptized, and this is fundamental to Campellism. So he must reverse the Savior's order in fact, and make a distinction between begetting by the Spirit, as the term is used in the Scriptures, and being born of the Spirit. But the word in the Greek is the same term that is translated *born*, γεννάω. But in one single instance is another word used. In James i, 18, ἀποχυνέω is used, but this properly means *to bring forth*, and is so translated in the fifteenth verse of the same chapter.

Being born of the Spirit means the whole divine process of regeneration from commencement to conclusion, and especially is it that last divine work by which the individual comes forth a new creature—being “born from above.” Campbell must make being born of the water, being born of the Spirit also; for if he does not, it follows that being born of the water, or baptism, according to him, is no part of the process of the new birth; for the Savior says, “that which is born of the Spirit is spirit” or spiritual; and if he is born of the Spirit before he is born of the water, he is spiritual before he is born again. And if he is not born of the Spirit until after he is born of the water, he is not yet a child of God when born of the water, because not born of the Spirit. Therefore, born of the water and born of the Spirit must be one and the same thing.

To this extent of absurdity does this peculiar doctrinal theory lead in the interpretation of the Scrip-

tures. Truth is consistent. It is *prima facie* proof of falsity that a doctrinal scheme makes the Scriptures self-contradictory, as does the one in question. Water in regeneration can be nothing but a symbol. The moment it is made an essential part of the process, it is brought into conflict with the work of the Spirit; for to be born of the Spirit is to be born again, to be "born from above," to be spiritual—a child of God. If this comes before baptism then the work is already accomplished; the subject of the change is already "spiritual." If after baptism, then baptism does not complete the work, and it may never be completed, as the individual may not exercise the faith required. Hence a careful study of Campbell's utterances will lead to the conclusion that he regarded being born of the water as being born of the Spirit; which is the only view that furnishes any escape from a hopeless dilemma, and this at the expense of a logical denial of the Spirit's work in the new birth.

It is true that he and his followers ascribe the work of instructing and convincing the mind to the Spirit; but this, according to them, is done by the word of divine truth—the word being the production of the Spirit. It therefore follows that every one who sincerely inquires, "What must I do to be saved?" is born of the Spirit, because he has been convinced by the word; but according to these teachers, there is still repentance, confession, and baptism, before such a spiritual personage, before he is born

again. In other words, he is born of the Spirit, and is spiritual; and, according to Paul, Rom. viii, 6: "To be spiritually minded is life and peace;" that is, he possesses this blessedness before repentance, confession, and the new birth. A marvelous fabrication of doctrinal inconsistencies.

And this is not all. Campbellism teaches that Christian baptism was first instituted or ordained by the commission, and the kingdom of heaven first set up on Pentecost. Yet they have Jesus here telling Nicodemus some two years previously that he must be born into a kingdom two years off, by a process not to be instituted for a similar length of time. One thing is certain, that the new birth and the kingdom of God were present facts at the time of this conversation. If the Master had meant that this new birth into this kingdom was to take place two years hence, he would have told Nicodemus so. It is evident that Jesus was not talking about Christian baptism in speaking of being born of the water; and if baptism is at all referred to, it must have been John's baptism, for one thing is certain, baptism in the name of Christ was an institution of the Gospel dispensation not yet introduced. The reasonable view therefore is, that water in the text no more refers to baptism than the water spoken of by the Savior in his conversation with the woman of Samaria at Jacob's well. The idea that it refers to water baptism is a legacy of mediæval rituals.

## CHAPTER XII.

## AN APPEAL TO AUTHORITIES.

ALTHOUGH Alexander Campbell has declared that "the meaning of this institution [the New Testament] has been buried under the rubbish of human traditions for hundreds of years," and that "it was lost in the Dark Ages, and has *never* been till recently disinterred," and "since the grand apostasy was attempted, till the present generation, the gospel of Jesus Christ has not been laid open to mankind in its original plainness, simplicity, and majesty;" yet he has appealed, as extensively as any polemical writer in the Christian centuries, to great names, both in the primitive Christian Church and in more modern times, in support of his theory of doctrine.

From the extent of these quotations, the reader whose knowledge of Church history is limited, would be led to infer that his doctrine has been taught and accepted by the Church at large in all ages, and is not that new thing that he claims to have dug up in this century from "the rubbish of human traditions." These two positions can not both be true; the doctrine can not be, as he claims in "Christian System," pp. 225-234, a part of the creeds of the great Protestant bodies, and the teaching of the great expositors of

Scriptural truth among them, and at the same time a new discovery made by himself and his father within this nineteenth century.

There can be but little question that Campbell is correct as to the latter of these two alternatives. The doctrine is new and essentially so, and he therefore has misunderstood the authorities he quotes. They do not hold to baptism as a necessary condition to justification. They certainly were not persistently contradicting themselves. This misconception is evidenced in the fact that he makes no distinction between baptism as a symbol, sign, seal, and means to salvation, and baptism as a condition antecedent and absolutely necessary to the pardon of sin. This confounding of these ideas, and also of baptismal regeneration, with his theory, will be seen further along in our examination of the teachings of these authorities.

As to the primitive Christian fathers—Justin Martyr, Origen, Ignatius, Irenæus, Tertullian, Cyprian of Carthage, Clement of Alexandria, and others—it is readily conceded, without entering into a detailed examination of their writings, that they attached an exaggerated importance to baptism, as well as to all other Church rites and ordinances. It is very possible to quote them in behalf of baptismal regeneration, and also for the superior efficacy of “the baptism of blood,” “of fire,” and the like. Let it be kept in remembrance that this is a mere appeal to men’s opinions,



and these are simply to be valued according to their ability to form correct opinions. It is true, he claims that he cites them as witnesses to fact. What fact? The fact as to what they believed and taught, and nothing more. Not in one single quotation that he makes in the "Christian System," pp. 218-225, is there an historical statement, save and except in those instances where the fact of infant baptism is set forth as regeneration. These passages were quoted by Dr. Wall to prove the existence of infant baptism as a fact. The reason assigned by these fathers is a mere matter of opinion; but on the contrary, it is not the *fact* for which Campbell cites these authorities, for he rejects that as of any binding authority, but the *opinion*, namely, that the baptism was to effect regeneration. How he can claim, as he does,\* that it is as witnesses in a question of *fact*, and not of *opinion*, we summon these ancients, and then proceed to quote Origen as saying, "Infants are baptized for the forgiveness of their sins." Now, what is fact and what opinion here? Is not the statement that "infants are baptized" a statement of fact, and the statement that this is for forgiveness of sins a mere matter of opinion? In the remainder of this quotation, Origen proceeds to explain this matter of opinion, or how infants, who are irresponsible, can be "baptized for the forgiveness of sins," all of which is only Origen's

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\* "Christian System," p. 223.

opinion, and made necessary because of the fallacious idea that this baptism was for the forgiveness of sin.

The fact is, Alexander Campbell and his followers will abide by the teachings of the Primitive Fathers only in those things that serve their purpose, or seem to do so. If we base our belief on primitive Christian doctrinal teaching, how much of it are we to take? Just where will we draw the line? Campbell seems to indicate at what they testify to as to fact. This we will readily accept, and insist at the same time that the reasons assigned by them for baptism, whether adult or infant, must be considered only as matters of opinion. The extent to which such opinions existed, is a matter of fact; and if he can show as a fact that his doctrine was generally received, he is entitled to the benefit of that fact alone. We speak of his doctrine of baptismal justification, or the pardon of sin, predicated on the condition of baptism. If they generally taught this doctrine, he is entitled to the benefit of this fact, nothing more, and it is still left an open question, Were they, in this respect, in harmony with Scriptural teaching or not? But did they really hold to Campbell's doctrine? No. The most that can be made out of their teachings is that baptism washes away the sins of an individual, whether adult or infant, because of an efficacy given to the water by its consecration. In other words, it was the doctrine of baptismal regeneration, a doctrine Campbell disclaims. They also believed in infant regeneration by baptism,

and administered it to infants for the same purpose that they did to adults. It therefore could not be for the pardon of sin, as Campbell's system teaches, but for a cleansing from the defilement of sin, a distinction that he has failed to see.

In fact, so far as the writer is acquainted with the writings and teachings of Campbell and his followers, he has observed that with them there is no distinction between justification and regeneration, or pardon and purification. Again, Campbell confounds what the fathers say of the import of baptism as a symbol with its design. Water baptism stands for and represents true baptism, the baptism of the Holy Ghost; and as Holy Ghost baptism is regeneration, and this regeneration may take place when the symbol is being used, so it is proper to speak of this baptism in symbol as regeneration. As an outward sign it stands for the presence of the thing signified. The only consistent interpretation we can give of the teaching of the primitive Christian fathers is that which we predicate on the principle just laid down. They attributed that to the symbol which was accomplished by the agency of the thing symbolized. The penitent was regenerated when baptized with water, because this represented the spiritual process. But they never taught that regeneration could not take place, and the individual not be saved, until he was baptized by water.

Justin Martyr, who suffered martyrdom about the

year A. D. 166, and who, because of his previous scholastic training and philosophical culture, was the most careful and conservative teacher of the second century, says, in his dialogue with Trypho\* on the subject of forgiveness of sins: "For Isaiah did not send you to a bath, there to wash away murder and other sins, which not even all the waters of the sea were sufficient to purge; but, as might have been expected, this was the saving bath of the olden time which followed those that repented, and who were no longer purified by the blood of goats and sheep, or by the ashes of an heifer, or by the offerings of fine flour, but by faith through the blood of Christ." So also he says further on:† "By reason, therefore, of this laver of repentance and knowledge of God, which has been ordained on account of the transgression of God's people, as Isaiah cries, we have believed and testified that that very baptism which we announced is alone able to purify those who have repented, and this is the water of life. But these cisterns which you have dug for yourselves are broken and profitless to you. For what is the use of that baptism which cleanses the body alone? Baptize the soul from wrath and from covetousness, from envy and from hatred, and lo, the body is pure." Language can not be more explicit as to the insufficiency of mere water baptism, "which cleanses the flesh and body alone,"

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\* T. and T. Clarke's Translation, p. 101. † *Id.* p. 104.

and also as to the necessity of a soul baptism which must be essentially spiritual. But the same writer again says:\* “But there is no other [way] than this to become acquainted with this Christ, to be washed in this fountain spoken of by Isaiah for the remission of sins; and for the rest, to live sinless lives.”

Now, it may be fairly asked, Does this writer believe in baptismal regeneration or baptismal justification? Can such doctrines be harmonized with his teachings, especially with the latter? But lest the followers of Campbell should think that we have not fully met the argument made from his quotation from Justin,† we will give it, and examine it and see if it in any manner conflicts with the views expressed above. Justin, in his first apology, says:‡ “I will also relate the manner in which we dedicate ourselves to God when we had been made new through Christ; lest, if we omit this, we seem to be unfair in the explanation we are making. As many as are persuaded, and believe that what we say is true, and undertake to be able to live accordingly, are instructed to pray and entreat God with fasting for the remission of their sins that are past, we praying and fasting with them. Then they are brought by us to where there is water, and are regenerated in the same manner in which we ourselves were regenerated. For in the

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\* T. and T. Clarke's Translation, p. 143.

† “Christian System,” p. 221.

‡ T. and T. Clarke's Translation, p. 57.



name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe, and of our Savior Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit, they then receive the washing with water; for Christ also said: 'Except ye be born again, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven.' . . . Since at our birth we were born without our own knowledge or choice, and were brought up in bad habits and wicked training, in order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and may obtain in water the remission of sins formerly committed, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be born again, and has repented of his sins, the name of God, the Father and Lord of the universe."

We have quoted thus extensively, that we might not be thought to evade any difficulty. The only expression in this whole quotation that bears any real resemblance to Campbell's doctrine is, "that they may obtain in water the remission of sins." Mr. Campbell has rendered this "remission of sins by water," evidently seeing that there might be "remission of sins *in water*" that was not remission of sins *by water*. Remission of sins *by water* is his doctrine; and we squarely contradict his translation of ἐν τῷ ὕδατι—by water." It is a translation to bolster up a theory. We are ready to admit, and always have been, that remission of sins may take place in baptism if the proper conditions of faith and repentance exist, and whenever these do truly exist, remission of sins takes place.



But the doctrine of Campbell is, no remission without baptism, and this Justin does not teach. It is very probable if seeking penitents were taught to-day to expect remission of sins when being baptized, either by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, they would ordinarily attain it then. But bear in mind, that "remission of sin *in* baptism" is a different thing from remission of sin *by* baptism.

Campbell, however, took care not to quote the first part of Justin's remarks, where he speaks of "fasting and prayer for the remission of sins," and that, too, both by the penitent and by the Church for him, for this praying Campbell condemns as useless.\* It is strange that if Justin's opinion is good testimony in one instance, it is not in another. But Justin, interpreted consistently with himself, teaches that regeneration is a spiritual process, and that water can not literally wash away sins, but is only a symbol in whose use sins may be washed away if repentance and faith are present.

Had we space to examine other of the primitive Christian fathers the same facts might be elicited as to their real views with regard to baptism. But it is unnecessary ; this question is not to be settled in any sense by such an appeal. As has been already said, the primitive Christians, from the middle of the second century, on down to the establishment of popery,

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\* "Christian System," p. 209.

attributed great efficacy to Churchly rites and ceremonies, until they came to be used as instruments of priestcraft, and came to be considered vehicles by which the Church conveyed spiritual blessings to the people. We much fear that it is this relic of priestly domination that Campbell has exhumed "from the rubbish" of the mediæval ages.

Mr. Campbell also appeals to the creeds of the Reformed Churches for a support for his doctrine; and in this case he has more completely misunderstood authorities than in the former. In two instances—the Episcopalian and the Methodist Episcopal—he has cited the ritual, and not the articles of religion. Can it be possible that Campbell did not know the difference between a ritual and a Church creed?

In the Episcopal ritual he gives us a quotation from the prayer of the administrator. "Almighty and everlasting God, who, by thy great mercy, didst save Noah and his family in the ark from perishing by water, and also didst lead the children of Israel, thy people, through the Red Sea, forgiving them by thy baptism, and by the baptism of thy well-beloved son Jesus Christ in the river Jordan didst sanctify the element of water in the mystical washing away of sin: we beseech thee, for thine infinite mercies, that thou wilt mercifully look upon *these thy servants*; wash them and sanctify them with the Holy Ghost, that they, being delivered from thy wrath, may be received into the ark of Christ's Church." We have quoted all that is at all material

to Mr. Campbell's argument, and if there is one word in this prayer that gives support to his theory, we fail to see it. First, baptism is called a "mystical washing." What is a "mystical washing?" Evidently a symbol or representation of a real washing, and to make doubly certain that this is its meaning, the ritual prayer asks for "washing with the Holy Ghost." If the baptism brought this washing, why the prayer for it by another agency? And so in the exhortation that follows there is nothing more implied than that baptism is a mystical washing, which, if properly received by an adult, may bring to him remission of sins and cleansing, not for the first time, but for all the sins up to the moment of its reception. Campbell fails to realize the truth contemplated by all these rituals, that, however holy or righteous we may be, we constantly need divine forgiveness and cleansing. Forgiveness and cleansing are prayed for in all these rituals in the administration of the Lord's Supper.

He has cited the Presbyterian Confession on baptism, Article XXVIII, Section 1, and the only language he predicates his idea upon is the statement that baptism "is a sign and seal of the covenant of grace, of his ingrafting into Christ, of regeneration, of remission of sins." His argument from this, "that this Church does not believe her own creed" because she baptizes infants, is the completest specimen of mere special pleading that can be found even in his writings. Baptism as a "sign and seal of the covenant of grace

and of the remission of sins," is something at antipodes to the doctrine of baptism as a necessary condition to the pardon of sin. Abraham "received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised." (Rom. iv, 11.) Here is a sign and seal of righteousness, justification, or remission of sins that came after this great blessing had been received, yet this is a blunder that Mr. Campbell and his followers uniformly make of conceiving that sign and seal, in this case, is nearly or quite equivalent to condition. All the Scriptural *signs* were signs after the fact, and not before; as see Exodus xxxi, 13 and 17, also Deut. v, 15, where the Sabbath was to be observed as a sign of deliverance from Egypt, and of sanctification by the Lord of the Israelites as his peculiar people.

To the same intent Mr. Campbell cites the formal address in the ritual of the Methodist Episcopal Church, made by the minister as introductory to the performance of the rite of baptism, and also the prayer of the minister for the candidate. What was said above with regard to the Episcopal ritual, applies also to this. A prayer offered for a candidate for baptism would most likely be for forgiveness of sin, cleansing, and spiritual life; and because it is such, Mr. Campbell and his followers immediately conclude that this implies that they have never been forgiven and cleansed from sin, and can not be until baptized. As well might he conclude that we teach by our ritual

that the Lord's Supper is a condition to remission of sin, for this is the burden of consecrating prayer.

This will suffice for the so-called creeds. A further examination would reveal the fact that in the large majority that he cites there is a manifest misapprehension of the signification of their language, underlain by his persistent misconception of the nature of a *sign* and *seal*, as clearly defined by the Scriptures.

Campbell and his followers also appeal to some eminent writers of the reformed Churches in support of his creed, such as Luther, Calvin, Scott, Dr. Dwight, Wesley, Clarke, Watson, and others. It would be an exceedingly tedious and profitless task to examine all that these writers have had to say upon this subject, and from this educe their real belief. But the reader may be assured that whatever of exaggerated importance they may have seemed to attribute to the ordinance of baptism, they did not believe and teach that it is absolutely essential to the remission of sin. Luther, although an earnest opponent to Rome in some of its fallacious teachings, and more especially to its blasphemous claims, was still under the influence of some of its false doctrines; as, for example, his doctrine of consubstantiation, also his belief in baptismal regeneration and a mystical efficacy attached to the water of baptism. But the quotation cited by Mr. Campbell\* from Luther's Commentary on Galatians does

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\* "Campbell and Rice," pp. 460, 461.



not teach his doctrine. It simply presents baptism as the rite *in* which "the renewing of the inward man" takes place, and he ascribes this renewing or regenerating to the Holy Ghost—"regenerated and renewed by the Holy Ghost," is his language in this comment—while Mr. Campbell says: \* "To call the receiving of any spirit, or any influence or energy, or any operation upon the heart of man, regeneration, is an abuse of all speech, as well as a departure from the diction of the Holy Spirit, *who calls nothing personal regeneration except the act of immersion.*"

The next authority he quotes is Calvin, Institutes, chapter xv.† Whatever Calvin has here said in this extensive quotation, must be limited by what he lays down primarily as the ends, or design, of the sacrament. He says: "Baptism is a sign of initiation by which we are admitted into the society of the Church, in order that, being incorporated in Christ, we may be remembered among the children of God. Now, it has been given us by God for these ends, which I have shown to be common to all sacraments, first, to promote our faith toward him; secondly, to testify our confession before men. We shall treat of both these ends of its institution in order." Now, we ask in this preliminary statement, Does Calvin hint at remission of sins as one of the ends or design of

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\* "Christian System," p. 202.

† "Campbell and Rice," pp. 470, 471.



baptism? By this preliminary statement interpret all he says concerning the design of baptism. But in this same citation Calvin has especially and specifically disclaimed Campbell's doctrine. He says: "For it was not the intention of Paul (Titus iii, 5; Eph. v, 26) to signify that our ablution and salvation are completed by the water, or that water contains in itself the virtue to purify, regenerate, and renew; nor did Peter mean (1 Pet. iii, 21) that it was the cause of salvation, but only that the knowledge and assurance of it is received in this sacrament, which is sufficiently evident from the words they have used. For Paul connects 'the word of life' and the 'baptism of water,' as if he said that our ablution and sanctification are announced to us by the gospel, and by baptism this message is confirmed." A careful examination of this quotation will reveal the fact that it is in open conflict with Mr. Campbell's doctrine in three material points. First, "our ablution and salvation are not completed by the water." Campbell says they are.\* "This immersion, says Peter, *saves* us, not by cleansing the body from its filth, but the conscience from its guilt." Secondly, the citation says that "water" does not "contain in itself the virtue to purify, regenerate, and renew." Campbell ascribes regeneration, renewing, and sanctification to immersion; † says "water is efficacious to the washing away of sin." ‡ Thirdly, the

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\* "Christian System," p. 215. † *Id.* p. 217. ‡ *Id.* p. 215.

citation denies that in any sense baptism is "the cause of salvation." On the contrary, Campbell says it is one of the "seven causes" to which the Scriptures attribute justification.\* The marvel is that Campbell would quote such an extract from Calvin in support of his views. Yet candor requires us to say that Calvin here says some things with reference to the virtue of baptism as a pledge of remission of sins through the blood of Christ, and the impartation of the remission in baptism, that seem to harmonize with Campbell's idea. But let it not be forgotten that Calvin's recent connection with Rome will account for his still seeking in some way to exalt the rite of baptism as an instrumentality to salvation. But when he is interpreted consistently with his general teaching, he will be found to be on the side of evangelical Christianity, and not on the side of papacy.

It is entirely unnecessary to follow Mr. Campbell very much farther in his appeal to authorities. The controversy might be carried on in this interminably, and perhaps no very definite results reached. It will suffice to call attention to but one more because it immediately concerns us as Methodists. John Wesley is cited as giving a very decided support to the doctrine of baptismal remission in the *Doctrinal Tracts*, a small volume formerly extensively circulated among American Methodists, and published by the Methodist

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\* "Christian System," pp. 247, 248.

Book Concern. There is one tract on baptism which is invariably quoted by the followers of Campbell in their discussions with Methodists. There is no question, and can be none, that the tract advocates the doctrine of baptismal regeneration. But was John Wesley its author? We think not. It is not necessary to enter into the details of the argument; but suffice it to say that very convincing reasons can be given to show that Samuel Wesley, the father of John Wesley, was its author, and he was always a believer in baptismal regeneration. But should we concede that John Wesley was the author of the tract, let it be borne in mind that he was for a long time in harmony with the Church of England on its doctrines. Not until after his conversion did he begin to break away from its formalities, and have more spiritual views of the conditions of salvation. It is well known to those who are familiar with Wesley's writings, that no more candid and teachable student of divine things ever lived than he. Whenever he discovered himself in error, he was prompt to acknowledge it. He has left on record his mature views on the design of baptism. See his sermon on the New Birth:

"IV. I proposed, in the last place, to subjoin a few inferences which naturally follow from preceding observations.

"1. And first it follows that baptism is not the new birth; they are not one and the same thing. Many, indeed, seem to imagine that they are just the same;

at least they speak as if they thought so ; but I do not know that this opinion is publicly avowed by any denomination of Christians whatever." Campbellism was not in existence then. "Certainly it is not by any within these kingdoms, whether of the established Church or those dissenting from it. The judgment of the latter is clearly declared in their large Catechism :

“‘Q. What are the parts of a sacrament?

“‘A. The parts of a sacrament are two ; the one an outward and sensible sign, the other an inward and spiritual grace thereby signified.

“‘Q. What is baptism?

“‘A. Baptism is a sacrament wherein Christ hath ordained the washing with water to be a sign and seal of regeneration by his Spirit.’ Here, it is manifest, baptism, the sign, is spoken of as distinct from regeneration, the thing signified. In the Church Catechism likewise the judgment of our Church is disclosed with the utmost clearness.

“‘Q. What meanest thou by this word sacrament?

“‘A. I mean an outward and visible sign of an inward spiritual grace.

“‘Q. What is the outward part, or form, in baptism?

“‘A. Water, wherein the person is baptized in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

“‘Q. What is the inward part or thing signified?

“‘A. A death unto sin, and a new life unto righteousness.’

“Nothing, therefore, is plainer than that, according to the Church of England, baptism is not the new birth. But, indeed, the reason of the thing is so clear and evident as not to need any other authority. For what can be more plain than that the one is an external, the other an internal work; that the one is a visible, the other an invisible thing, and therefore wholly different from each other; the one being an act of man purifying the body, the other a change wrought by God in the soul; so that the former is just as distinguishable from the latter as the soul from the body, or water from the Holy Ghost?”

“From the preceding reflections we may, secondly, observe that as the new birth is not the same thing with baptism, so it does not always accompany baptism; they do not constantly go together. A man may possibly be ‘born of the water,’ and yet not be ‘born of the Spirit.’ There may sometimes be the outward sign where there is not the inward grace. I do not now speak with regard to infants; it is certain our Church [the Church of England] supposes that all who are baptized in their infancy are born again; and it is allowed that the whole office for the baptism of infants [in the Church of England] proceeds upon this supposition. Now, is it an objection of any weight against this that we can not comprehend how this work can be wrought in infants? For neither can we comprehend how it is wrought in persons of riper years. But whatever be the case with



infants, it is sure that all of riper years, who are baptized, are not at the same time born again."

To this might be added extensive quotations of a similar import from other of his writings, showing that in no sense was Wesley in agreement with Campbell on the design of baptism.

Campbell and his followers often quote Wesley's notes on Acts xxii, 16, where he says: "Baptism administered to a real penitent is both a means and seal of pardon. Nor did God in the primitive Church ordinarily bestow this on any, unless through this means." Here we have on the part of Campbell and his followers a persistent confounding of means with condition, and necessary condition. That may be a means which is in no sense a condition, and much less a necessary condition. Everything that helps to the sinner's salvation is a means to that end. The Lord's Supper has been such a means in many cases; so also a public confession in various ways has been a means to the immediate pardon of sin.

And as to the second part of the statement, as to primitive Christian times, baptism being the public act of the espousal of Christ, and the breaking of caste with heathenism, it is probable that Wesley's statement was true in many instances, as it is to-day in the heathen lands. Baptism performed thus, either in sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, becomes the means by which the confessor lays hold of Christ by faith and secures the pardon of sin. But how absurd to



attribute to the mere means an unconditional saving efficacy, and say that the means is a condition without which there can be no pardon of sin!

Methodists have been accustomed to make use of a great diversity of *means* to help the inquiring soul to complete heart faith in Christ, and often assure the unconverted penitent that if he will exercise true faith in the act of baptism he may be saved. If he has not been saved then, but will afterward grasp in his mind the full significance of his commitment and consecration to Christ in baptism, its blessed signification may become a means of his salvation experimentally. And he may ever afterwards look upon baptism as the divinely appointed sign and symbol of his regeneration, and seal of his covenant relation to God.

There is a world-wide difference between knowing, through the witness of the Spirit, that I was saved when I was baptized, and knowing that I have been saved only because I have been baptized. In the first case, the baptism performed in faith may be a blessed *means*; in the other it is the saving condition that is to furnish the only evidence of salvation, and as such can only last so long as the individual is not a backslider. When reclaimed from backsliding, he must have other evidence. What shall it be? It is a grave mistake that the doctrines of the reformed Churches render any support to this incongruous theory of the design of baptism.

## CHAPTER XIII.

## SUNDRY OBJECTIONS TO THE DOCTRINE.

THE doctrine of Campbell and his followers is open to a series of fatal objections, any one of which is sufficient to show that it can not be a scheme consistent with truth. Truth is harmonious, and revealed truth must not be so interpreted that it continually conflicts with the soundest dictates of reason and common sense.

The Lord said by the prophet Isaiah,\* “Come, now, let us reason together,” placing thereby an honor upon the proper use of reason, and especially in the matter of pardon of sin. There must therefore be unity, consistency, and adaption to human conditions and needs in the scheme of salvation. Any interpretation of it that makes it a failure through long ages, and an impossibility under a diversity of circumstances, over which free moral agents can have no control, is too narrow for the abounding grace of God. And Campbellism is just such a system of interpretation, as we hope to show most conclusively by these objections:

*First.* The system of doctrine declares the whole evangelical dispensation a failure, absolute and unquestionable, from the days of the immediate successors of

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\* Isa. i, 18.

the apostles, until the preaching of Alexander Campbell and his coadjutors. Campbell has said : \* " It was in this commonwealth (Kentucky) that this doctrine was first publicly promulgated in modern times ; and it has now spread over this continent, and with singular success is now returning to Europe and the land of our fathers." And in another place he substantially makes the same claim.† It is true that he quotes the primitive Christian fathers, and some of the creeds of the Reformed Churches, and the teachings of the leading commentators, to support his theory ; but this declaration of the newness of this doctrine is far more in harmony with the facts than his use of these authorities, as we have shown in a former chapter. It would be a very singular circumstance that a doctrine so vital as that of the conditions essential to the remission of sin should be accepted in creed and teaching, and uniformly denied in practice, especially when the condition required was the observance of a Churchly rite. The tendency of religious declension is not toward spirituality, but toward form.

The objection, therefore, is valid, that if this doctrine be true, the Christian Church for fifteen centuries has been a marvelous failure. The gates of hell have prevailed against it from the third century of the Christian era until the days of Alexander Camp-

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\* " Campbell and Rice," p. 472.

† " Christian System," pp. 8-10, and p. 180.

bell. It must be remembered that the doctrine is vital, if it be true. Every sinner saved without immersion as a condition to the remission of sins, is saved outside the provisions of the covenant of grace, if saved at all—saved alone through his ignorance. What shall we think of a doctrine so vital in the Christian system as this must be, if true, and yet so obscure in Scripture teaching that the great scholars of the Christian era failed to discover it, and conform to it?

What is true of the past is equally true of the present; for although Campbell and his followers have been publishing this doctrine for nearly three-quarters of a century, yet the great body of evangelical Churches have failed to subscribe to it, and have therefore failed to find it in the Scriptures. Among these are to be found the vast majority of the most eminent scholars of this intellectual and critical age—scholars thoroughly versed in a knowledge of the Scriptures. This failure must be ascribed either to obscurity in the doctrine, or persistent prejudice in the students of God's Word. The latter alternative can scarcely be maintained, although some of these teachers do not hesitate to put the rejection of this doctrine on that ground. It is sometimes somewhat toned down, and the failure to discover it is ascribed to ignorance. Mr. Campbell himself puts it upon this ground, at least by implication. He says: \* “Infants,

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\* “Christian System,” p. 233.

idiots, deaf and dumb persons, innocent pagans, wherever they can be found, with all pious Pædobaptists we commend to the mercy of God." Then, further on, in order to justify the hard uncharitableness of his doctrine, he says: "But such of them [Pædobaptists] as willfully *despise* this salvation, and who, having the opportunity to be immersed for the remission of sins, willfully despise or refuse, we have as little hope for them as they have for all who refuse salvation *on their own terms of the gospel*." But this justification will not do. Other Christian denominations do not deny salvation to the penitent believer. Nor do they hold any view that compels them to unchristianize honest inquirers after the truth as it is in Christ.

*Second.* Akin to the objection just urged is this: the doctrine makes it possible for the most perfect human virtue, holiness, and devotion to Christ and his cause to exist, without a fulfillment of all the conditions of pardon of sin. Such names as Luther, Melancthon, Ridley, Latimer, Jerome of Prague, Huss, Wesley, Fletcher, Payson, Guthrie, and Asbury will occur to the reader, and a countless unnamed host besides, who have toiled, sacrificed, suffered, denied themselves, wrought righteousness, and were Christian benefactors to the sin-oppressed world. And yet they failed in so essential a matter as the conditions of the pardon of sin. It was in no minor matter, no insignificant thing, in which they came short. It was nothing less than the converting act; for Mr. Camp-

bell says: \* “Immersion was [is] the act of turning to God. . . . And from the day of Pentecost to the final *Amen* in the revelation of Jesus Christ, no person was said to be converted, or to turn to God, until he was buried in and raised up out of the water.” And yet by the Savior’s criterion we must know these unconverted persons to be his, for he says: “By their fruits ye shall know them.” Where is the follower of Campbell that has brought forth more of the fruits of righteousness in holy consecrated living, than many to be found in the Pædobaptist Churches?

Let it be observed that this righteousness must exist without a fulfillment of the conditions to the pardon of sinners—sinners unpardoned, yet bringing forth all the fruits of righteousness.

Besides, these claim a consciousness of pardoned sin in “joy and peace in the Holy Ghost.” Mr. Campbell’s reply to this is: † “How far they may be happy in the peace of God and the hope of heaven, I presume not to say. And we know so much of human nature as to say, that he that imagines himself pardoned will be as happy as he that is really so. But one thing we do know, that none can rationally and with certainty enjoy the peace of God and hope of heaven but they who intelligently, and in full faith, are born of water or immersed for the remission of sins.” It is plain from this statement, so positively

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\* “Christian System,” p. 209. † *Id.* p. 234.



made, that Mr. Campbell, and likewise his followers, predicate their assurance on their infallibility. If they know, as he claims in the citation above, that immersion in order to remission of sins is a necessary condition, then they have assurance of salvation. But if there is the least particle of question as to this being a true doctrine, there is just so much uncertainty in their assurance, and they only "*imagine*" they are saved.

But what must be the confusion in the mind of any one who could perpetrate the following:\* "And as the testimony of God, and not conceit, imagination, nor our reason upon what passes in our minds, is the ground of our certainty, we see and feel we have an assurance which they can not have?" There must first be the "conceit" that despite the culture, piety, and devotion of the residue of Christendom, he has discovered the truth which they failed to discover, and that he knows with certainty that he is right. He fails to see what ought to be obvious to any careful reasoner, that his assurance is predicated alone on a process of "reasoning," which must of necessity be fallible, and which if it err in any of its steps, leaves him without any assurance whatever. But on the contrary, the assurance he calls "conceit" and "imagination" is experimental and subjective, and the product of faith in Christ, and actually gives its possessor joy and peace. Upon what is the believing

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\* "Christian System," p. 234.

penitent to base his conclusions, but upon the feeling of non-condemnation, his assurance that his sin is pardoned? It is all Mr. Campbell or his followers can have after they have been baptized—a subjective assurance predicated on their feeling and convictions.

But according to Mr. Campbell's statement of the case, he is devoid of this assurance, for he was not "intelligently immersed for the remission of sins." He was baptized by Elder Luce, of the Baptist Church, on the 12th of June, 1812.\* Now, in the debate with Professor Rice, he declares that "some twenty years" before this debate, and during his discussion with Mr. McCalla, which was in 1823, he first preached the doctrine of baptism as a condition to pardon of sin, and all his statements go to show that he had not apprehended his doctrine of baptismal remission until eleven years after his baptism. In the paragraph above quoted,† he says the experience of the first converts—that is, the primitive Christians—shows the difference between their immersion and the immersions or sprinklings of modern gospels. Now, then, what is the difference between an immersion by the Baptists and an immersion by him or his followers? Solely a difference in design. Did A. Campbell design the remission of sin in his immersion? He simply received it on the belief that it was the proper

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\* "Memoirs of A. Campbell," p. 396.

† "Christian System," p. 234.

mode, or, as he would say, "action," in baptism. His was therefore one of the immersions he condemns, and, *ex necessitate rei*, he is without a certainty of assurance.

This *ad hominem* argument lies as against his system; for conditions of salvation are such as must be fulfilled by the free moral agent having God's gracious pardon in view. Any merely accidental fulfillment of the condition will not suffice.

A minister of this belief, in a discussion with the writer, replied to this argument by saying: "God, in his mercy, would not reject any one who sought to the best of his knowledge and ability to fulfill the divine requirements, and therefore Brother Campbell's baptism, being performed in sincerity, was no doubt accepted for the remission of his sins."

The reply was, that the statement concerning the forbearance of God was fully accepted, and that it required no further stretch of charity to save sincere Pædobaptists. Yet still it remains that a matter so essential as a condition to salvation is so obscure that it took even Mr. Campbell eleven years from his baptism to apprehend it, and multiplied thousands live happy and die triumphant without complying with it.

*Third.* Again, it is an unanswerable objection to this doctrine, that it is not and can not be consistently carried out in practice.

Many who are not truly penitent believers are baptized. Both faith and repentance must be thor-

ough and genuine, faith of the \**“heart”* and †*“godly sorrow.”*

If they are not truly penitent believers, their baptism must not be valid, and whenever they become such they must be rebaptized. And it will be very necessary that they wait at first until they are sure that they are truly penitent. The fact is, that this doctrine is compelled, by the difficulties that beset it, to lay but little stress upon repentance and faith, and all upon baptism.

We are aware that this is disclaimed; but it must be admitted that there is a wide difference among those that present themselves for baptism. Some are serious, thoughtful, humble, and truly penitent, while others evince but very little of these characteristics; their profession is a mere form, scarcely producing in them genuine sorrow for sin, and any earnest desire to be cleansed from it. Now, in this latter class, is the baptism a penitent believer's baptism? If it is not, then it must needs be performed again after the individual becomes a penitent believer. More than this, because of the misleading influence of a baptism performed under the conditions described above, would it not of necessity be an important thing to inquire as to the genuineness of the repentance and the faith before baptism?

The only appearance of an escape from this di-

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\* Rom. x, 10. † 2 Cor. vii. 10, 11, and Acts xx, 21.

lemma is to assume that when the individual does become a penitent believer in the true sense of the term, he may appropriate his baptism before performed for his salvation. But the baptism by the assumption is made an impenitent's baptism. This is a tremendous stride beyond infant baptism. There is no escape from this objection, except to claim that all who present themselves for baptism among them are penitent believers in the strictest sense. A claim that nobody will admit.

*Fourth.* Again, a very pertinent objection to this scheme of doctrine is, that it requires a diversity of conditions under the different dispensations of grace—one in the Patriarchal age, another in the Mosaic, and still another in the Christian—thus destroying the unity of the divine plan. Yea, more, the Savior broke in upon the established divine plan by saving the sick of the palsy,\* the woman that was a sinner,† and the thief on the cross,‡ outside the established conditions, and simply upon repentance and faith. It has been fully shown in a preceding chapter how baseless the assumptions of this doctrine of positive institutes; but the objection alleged is, that it makes God vary in the conditions to the pardon of sins in the different dispensations. It is not a sufficient answer to this objection that God required duties under the Mosaic dispensation that he does not now require. These

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\* Matt. ix, 2. † Luke vii, 48. ‡ Luke xxiii, 43.



duties were not conditions to the pardon of sin, but obligations belonging to a righteous life. God is no respecter of persons in the conditions to salvation, and can not be, for he is just and impartial. Repentance and faith are universal and indisputable conditions. Rites are in no sense necessary, but are simply expressions of faith, which may, and does, exist without them.

*Fifth.* We object to this doctrine because it can not be preached, and can not be made applicable to the conditions and circumstances of all sinners. Christians may, and often do, backslide; and when they are reclaimed they must repent of their sins, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ as at first, and, if baptism is a part of the condition, they should be baptized. But Campbell and his followers will not rebaptize; therefore they occupy this anomalous position, that they refuse to a sinner a part of the condition to salvation, or they say the conditions to salvation are not the same to all penitent believers.

An attempt is made to evade this difficulty by claiming that baptized persons are naturalized citizens of the kingdom of Christ, and therefore can be restored through prayer. But this leads to this absurdity that an individual whom God has rejected is still, because of his baptism, a citizen of the kingdom of heaven. Baptism gives the title to citizenship, however vile the individual may be; and if he remains unrepentant until death, it will result in this,



that a citizen of the kingdom of heaven will reach the kingdom of darkness at last, and yet, by virtue of his baptism, be a member of the kingdom of heaven.

*Sixth.* Again, is it not a singular doctrine that makes the outbrealking backslider a child of the kingdom of heaven, and at the same time makes an alien of the virtuous and upright child of Christian parents, simply because it has not been ascertained whether he is old enough for the so-called believer's baptism? But children belong to the kingdom of heaven; Christ so declares it.\* If so, when do they cease to be such? When do they become aliens, that they need to be naturalized?† A child forfeits his place in the kingdom, according to Campbell, but a baptized backslider never. What a jumble of inconsistencies is involved in making this doctrine harmonize!

Among the denominations of professing Christians, there is none that the logic of their position more requires to be believers in infant baptism than these, for then the Christian could be taught by his parents to pray; but now, being born an alien, he has, to use their language, none of the rights of petition. This belongs to citizens. Let it be remarked, that Pædobaptists do not baptize children to make them members of the kingdom of heaven, except in its outward or visible conditions, and the right to baptize them is predicated on the fact that they are

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\* Matt. xviii, 16. † "Christian System," p. 191.

already members of the invisible kingdom of heaven. But the absurdity of this position does not end here. Mr. Campbell makes the assurance of the Christian to depend on the fact of his "intelligent immersion for the remission of sins."\* Now, the backslider, having no immersion for the remission of sins as a backslider, must be devoid of assurance, or must receive his assurance from repentance and faith exercised by him for the remission of sins. But where is the Christian who is not conscious of shortcomings, backslidings, omissions of duty, sins of haste and passion, that he feels must be forgiven, or he be at last brought under condemnation? If he finds forgiveness, it must be "by repentance toward God, and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ;"† and his assurance of this forgiveness can not be founded on his baptism in any sense, because the condemnation from which he seeks release is subsequent to the baptism. How can he make that act accrue to his remission of sin that was previous to his sin for which he seeks remission? The plain fact is, this doctrine of remission and assurance runs a tilt against all reason and common sense.

*Seventh.* Again, we object to this doctrine because it makes that a condition to the pardon of sin which a person can not perform for himself. He is dependent upon another sinner, who must exercise the priestly prerogative of bringing him into the pardon of sin.

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\* "Christian System," p. 234. † Acts xx, 21.

It is a sheer evasion to retort that we are dependent upon our fellow-men for the word of life. The word of life is not a *condition* to the pardon of sin. We use the term condition here in the sense of a free moral act to be performed by the seeker. If I can not get this word of life, I am not held responsible for it. I am only responsible when it is positively accessible to me and I reject it. I may be saved without it; but I can not be saved without repentance or faith in Christ. All the heathen that are saved, are saved alone through their knowledge and trust in God, through their belief in him as they know him.

But this doctrine says the penitent sinner can not alone perform the conditions, must be lost, despite his repentance and faith, unless he has another sinner with him to put him into the water. These surely are priestly prerogatives without parallel.

*Eighth.* Again, we object to this doctrine because it makes salvation impossible under numerous circumstances and contingencies,—absence of water, in sickness, in prison, on a dying bed. It can not be that a righteous and merciful God has so hedged the way to salvation about with conditions that penitent souls must be sent to perdition because of mere physical contingencies. There are large territories on this globe where a sufficient quantity of water could not possibly be procured for the purposes of immersion. In other words, there are zones where souls can not be saved; or else the Almighty must be continually

altering the conditions of salvation because of these physical contingencies.

There have come under the observation of the writer several cases where repentance and faith in Christ were exercised on the death-bed, and the persons received the joyful assurance of salvation, and were enabled to die triumphant; and yet baptism was not administered at all, because the friends and pastors of these sick ones did not believe in any thing but immersion. It is an assumption, we think, too ultra for the most audacious dogmatism to send these redeemed souls to perdition for want of an immersion, and to attribute their joyful assurance to a deception. But if they were saved, then it follows that baptism is not a necessary condition to the pardon of sin. But repentance and faith were necessary, and it is this element of necessity that enters into all conditions of salvation.

## CHAPTER XIV.

JUSTIFICATION BY FAITH *VERSUS* WORKS.

FAITH in Christ as the only antecedent and necessary condition to the pardon of sin or to justification, is the great and distinguishing doctrine of the Reformation. It was from this invulnerable bulwark of gospel truth that the papacy was assailed and defeated. Yet it is this doctrine that meets the most bitter antagonism from Mr. Campbell and his followers. It is the word *only*, in the evangelical creeds, that awakens their most intense opposition. They assume that justification by faith *only*, means justification without Christ, without the word of truth, without grace, etc.\* They usually quote a fraction of the ninth article of the Methodist Articles of Religion, and present it to the public as teaching that the Methodist Episcopal Church holds that the sinner is justified without grace, without Christ, without any other agency or instrumentality than faith. The writer once received a challenge for a discussion from one of their representative men, who asked him to affirm the words: "Wherefore, that we are justified by faith alone is a most wholesome doctrine and very

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\* "Christian System," p. 247.

full of comfort." To this he responded: "These words, in separation from the rest of the article, do not represent our belief; but I am quite willing to affirm the entire article; will you deny it?" To which he replied that he did not wish to deny the whole proposition. This incident is given to show the fact of the misrepresentation of our doctrine so prevalent among them. Some Methodist ministers have been drawn by them into an affirmation of this fragment of this article.

The article, as a whole, sets forth an unassailable statement of doctrine, and the first part of it clearly defines what is meant by the conclusion with which the article ends. "We are accounted righteous before God, only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, by faith, and not for our own works or deservings." It is plain to any unprejudiced reader that "faith only" is faith in Christ. Faith must have an object, and that is defined in a former part of the article. It is plain also that "faith only" is in antithesis to "our own works and deservings." "It is by faith that it might be by grace."\* Yet the followers of A. Campbell scarcely refer to this article of religion that they do not misrepresent it and the teaching of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

What is the question at issue? Simply this: On

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\* Rom. iv, 16.



what condition can the penitent sinner be justified? Not what God must do or Christ has done to make justification possible; not what must be done for sinners who are ignorant of the plan of salvation; not what impenitent sinners must do; but what must the penitent sinner do, who, like the Philippian jailer, asks, "What must I do to be saved?"\* It simply serves to produce confusion to begin to talk of "seven causes" of justification. It is readily admitted that there are causes meritorious, efficacious, gracious, instrumental, helpful; but what is the *conditional* cause, the act the sinner must perform as a condition to the pardon of sin.

Again, let it be borne in mind, that it is not what the Christian must do to be justified as a Christian. The Christian must obey the divine commandments to the best of his ability—all the commands. Among these, and only important as a Churchly rite, is baptism by water. This distinction, so obvious to unbiased students of the divine economy, clearly reconciles the apostle James's statements with the teachings of the apostle Paul. (James ii, 17-26.) James is treating of the justification of the righteous, not of sinners. Abraham is justified by faith and works before God when he offers up Isaac twenty-two years after he was justified by faith without works, according to the apostle Paul. (Rom. iv, 1-12.)

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\* Acts xvi, 30.

Campbell and his followers are ready on all occasions to cite the apostle James as condemning the doctrine of the justification of the penitent sinner by faith alone, and as supporting their theory of justification by baptism. And in so doing they present themselves in the inconsistent attitude of at one time holding that baptism is one of the *works* upon which sinners are justified, and then again that it is not a work. For by their interpretation of Titus iii, 5, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost," they make "the washing of regeneration" to be baptism, and, if baptism, then it is in direct antithesis to "works of righteousness," which are excluded by the apostle as not having anything to do with our salvation. (So also Eph. ii, 8, 9.) Now, either baptism *is* or *is not* a "work of righteousness." If it is, it does not save us; if it is not, then what has the justification taught by James to do with the salvation of the sinner? The followers of Campbell must decide just what disposition they will make of baptism. If it is a work, then it is excluded from the justification of the sinner; if they deny that it is a work, then they must give up their favorite quotation from James.

Mr. Campbell seeks to save his system from the charge that it teaches salvation by works, by claiming a peculiar excellence for baptism as an act of

faith. Under the caption,\* “Immersion not a Mere Bodily Act,” he says: “Views of baptism as a mere external and bodily act, exert a very injurious influence on the understanding and practice of men. Hence many ascribe to it but little importance in the Christian economy. ‘Bodily exercise,’ says Paul, ‘profits little.’ We have been taught to regard immersion in water into the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The soul of the intelligent subject is as fully immersed *into the Lord Jesus* as his body is *in the water*, as an act of the whole man—body, soul, and spirit. His soul rises with the Lord Jesus, as his body rises out of the water; and into one spirit with all the family of God is he immersed.”

If “immersion is not a mere bodily act,” what is it? The condition of heart and mind is no more a part of immersion than it is of sprinkling or pouring. In other words, the heart can be just as humble, trustful, submissive, along with affusion as with immersion. And if the essential thing is the purpose of heart and mind, why lay the stress on the bodily act? What an absurd idea that “the soul of the intelligent subject is as fully immersed *into the Lord Jesus Christ* as his body is immersed in the water.” This is a mysticism that surpasses everything that has come within the knowledge of the writer. If baptism is a

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\* “Christian System,” p. 246.

spiritual change wrought within us, then water baptism is a mere bodily act—a shadow, a symbol. How are we “immersed” (baptized) into the Lord Jesus? Not into water “into the Lord Jesus,” for the act terminates with the immersion in the water. So if you are baptized into the Lord Jesus, some other agency must accomplish this work. The very confusion Mr. Campbell gets into here is a manifest token of the inconsistency of the whole theory.

This doctrine, then, is contradicted by numerous clear and explicit passages that ascribe salvation to faith without any thing else—faith alone as a *condition*. By the word *condition* we mean that which a free, moral agent is required to perform as his *personal act* to secure pardon or justification. *Condition* must be distinguished from *means*. Christ is the meritorious means; the Holy Ghost, the efficacious means; the *word of divine truth*, the instrumental means; and baptism or the Lord’s Supper, the helpful means, to the performance of the *condition*—faith in Christ.

By faith in Christ we do not mean simply intellectual faith or the mind’s assent to truth recognized; that faith that is the result of evidence understood; for that is a necessitated faith—a compelled faith. Man is so constituted intellectually that when he apprehends the truth, he must believe it. He may deny it; and previous to his knowledge he may refuse to see it or the evidence for it; but if once he sees the evidence, he must accept the truth, if the evidence

is clear and explicit. Hence Campbell is wrong when he sets forth faith as the simple "belief of the truth on testimony, and never can be more nor less than that." \* Saving or justifying faith is an unnecessitated act of the soul. It is predicated upon some intellectual belief. The believer accepts as true the gospel of Christ, and then believes *in, on, or upon* him as his personal Savior. And this faith is the heart faith spoken of by Paul. Rom. x, 10: "For with the heart man believeth into righteousness." In this faith the will submits to the will of Christ, and the affections cling to him as a Savior. Thus intellect, will, and sensibilities are employed in this faith. Mr. Campbell's faith can be, and no doubt is, exercised by devils, for they know the truth of these things. Again, this faith crowns a genuine repentance. Whenever a genuine godly sorrow for sin exists, it will ultimate in this faith. So godly sorrow and faith are inseparable in this, that faith implies godly sorrow, and godly sorrow in its completest exercise takes hold upon Christ. It is sorrow for Jesus' sake.

By *faith only*, we mean that faith is that without which no adult sinner can be justified, and that which when a penitent sinner has, he is justified whatever else he may have or not have. Faith in Christ justifies the sinner without works. No truth could be more specifically stated and fully elaborated than this has been by the apostle Paul in Rom. iii, 20-31,

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\* "Christian System," p. 53.



and iv, 1-25. He here sets forth that the sinner—mark, the *sinner*—is “justified by faith without the deeds of the law.” What law does he refer to? Evidently the moral law; for in verse 29 he presents the Gentiles and the Jews as the subjects of this law, and the Gentiles never had any law but a moral law.

Again, he sets forth the justification of Abraham as a type of the justification of all. Abraham was justified by faith without works. “For if Abraham were justified by works he had whereof to glory; but not before God. For what saith the Scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.” It is clear that the *works* here spoken of could not be works of the Mosaic law, but works of the moral law. And then to show how completely justification is independent of all ritual performances, as baptism, he shows that Abraham was justified before he was circumcised. “For we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.” Then he shows the office of circumcision, and the relation wherein Abraham and his justification stand to all believers. “And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had, yet being uncircumcised; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed to them also.” Now, if this argu-



ment of the apostle teaches anything, it teaches that justification can not be predicated upon any works whatever. But, if possible, the apostle is still more explicit in excluding everything but faith as the condition to the sinner's justification, in Gal. ii, 16. We quote from the Revised Version: "Yet knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, save [marginal reading 'but only'] through faith in Jesus Christ, even we believed on Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ, and not by the works of the law." Now, no amount of verbal shuffling with "seven causes," more or less, of the sinner's justification can set aside the manifest import of this language.

Mr. Braden, in his discussion with Mr. Hughey,\* sums up the result of his investigation of Romans iii and iv, after this fashion: "Now, reasons Paul, this was before the law was given, or before he was circumcised, or he had done a single thing required in the law. Then, if God could justify Abraham before the law and without it, he can now justify men after the law, when it has been abolished, by faith in Jesus, just as he justified Abraham for faith in himself, without the law, before it was given." A more baseless assumption could not well be conceived than this, upon which this attempt at an explanation is predicated. It is assumed that Paul here refers to the

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\* "Hughey and Braden," p. 535.

ceremonial law, an assumption generally made by followers of Campbell. In ch. iii, 19, the apostle says: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world become guilty before God." Now, what law is it that makes "*all the world* guilty before God?" It certainly is not the ceremonial law. Again, verse 29 says: "Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law." What law? the ceremonial law? Evidently not.

But Mr. Braden here admits that Abraham was justified "before the law, and without it." If so, as an example for us, we must be justified without it; namely, the whole law of God, and baptism is a part of that law.

Again, Mr. Braden asks in this connection: "Had he [Abraham] believed God, and remained in Ur of the Chaldees, would he have been justified by faith alone?" He would have lost his justification. Was he not justified until he started on his journey? The same question might be asked at any stage of Abraham's life. To show its pertinency, Mr. Braden believes that as soon as the penitent believer is baptized he is justified. Suppose, then, he stops in a righteous life just there, would he be justified? The simple question is, When was Abraham justified? The only answer is, The moment he believed in God.

In Eph. ii, 8-10, the apostle Paul excludes from the

salvation of the sinner, all works of righteousness, saying: "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship created in Christ Jesus unto good works." The *works* that are here excluded, are not simply the works of the law, but all good works, especially those that belong to the gospel dispensation, for the very works that are excluded are the works that come after the sinner is "created in Christ Jesus,"—"a new creation."\* Now, Christian baptism is a "good work." If so, it must come after the new creation. The doctrine here inculcated is this, that "good works" must have a good source, as good fruit can alone spring from a good tree.† I suppose that they will not claim that baptism is not a good work, or a work at all. If they should do so, then they must give up, as already shown, their favorite quotation. Salvation then is "by grace," and "through faith," and "not of works," which makes it a salvation through faith alone, so far as the human side of it is concerned, *i. e.*, the sinner's condition or act of acceptance.

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\* 2 Cor. v, 17. † Matt. xii, 33.

## CHAPTER XV.

CAMPBELLISM ON THE OPERATION OF THE  
HOLY GHOST.

IT is somewhat difficult to get a clear and concise understanding of just what Alexander Campbell held with reference to the influence and operation of the Holy Ghost in human hearts. At one time he seems to be almost at one with the other evangelical denominations; at another, he seems to hold the view that the Holy Ghost does not in any manner impress human hearts, aside from the influence of the Bible teachings on the understandings and judgments of men. One thing is certain, however, his followers have reached stability of view in this matter, and very promptly reject all immediate impression upon human hearts by the personal Divine Spirit. However, there is this one point upon which they and their great leader concur; - they agree in denying any immediate and personal influence of the Holy Ghost upon the heart of the sinner previous to conversion. With them there is no such thing as conviction by the Spirit. It is simply the convincing of the judgment, wrought by the naked word.

As already intimated, consistency requires that

they deny the immediate influence of the Spirit, both in and after conversion. For if there be such a thing as the presence and immediate influence of the Spirit upon the heart after conversion, it follows that such presence and influence felt must be the testimony to such heart of divine acceptance, and at once the theory that the fact of obedience to the divine commandments is the pledge of pardon, is set at naught. Hence Campbellism can not allow the doctrine of the direct witness of the Spirit; for if this is conceded, on what ground can they refuse to accept the salvation of many who are not baptized according to their view, who testify that they have the witness of the Spirit to their salvation?

But we prefer to let Campbell and subsequent exponents of his doctrine state their belief in this matter. Mr. Campbell says:\* “The Spirit of God inspired all the spiritual ideas in the New Testament, and confirmed them by miracles; and he is ever present with the word he inspired. He descended from heaven on the day of Pentecost, and has not formally ascended since. In the sense in which he descended, he certainly has not ascended, for he is to animate and inspire with new life the church or temple of the Lord. ‘Know ye not,’ you Christians, ‘that your bodies are temples of the living God?’ ‘The temple of God is holy; which temple you are.’ ‘If the Spirit of him

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\* “Christian System,” p. 64.

that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, God shall quicken your mortal bodies by *his Spirit that dwelleth in you.*' Now, we can not separate the Spirit and word of God, and ascribe so much power to one, and so much power to the other; for so did not the apostles. Whatever the word does, the Spirit does; and whatever the Spirit does in the work of converting men, the word does. We neither believe nor teach abstract Spirit, nor abstract word, but word and Spirit, Spirit and word."

We doubt if it is possible to find in the entire range of theological discussion a more confused and incoherent statement of doctrine than this. At one time you are led to believe that its author accepts the doctrine of the immediate presence of the Divine Spirit in human hearts; then again this is all set aside by putting the Spirit in some indefinable way in the word. What can he mean by "Spirit and word" not "abstract" from each other? Does the Spirit, as a divine personal influence, go along with the word to make it more potent than its unattended truths would be to human understanding, judgment, and conscience? If he means this, we can in thought abstract the Spirit in his influence, from the influence of the naked word. Again, does the Spirit always attend the word, so that to human minds the two are inseparable?

In the very next paragraph he heightens this confusion by saying: "But the Spirit is not *promised* to



*any persons out of Christ.* It is only promised to them that believe and obey him." And this leads to the inquiry, How can this be if the convicted sinner had both Spirit and word before, in what sense different do the persons in Christ have the Spirit now, than they had before they obeyed God? Is the Spirit in the word for the unconverted sinner, or is it for him just the naked word? If the Spirit and the word go together in convincing the sinner, it can not be said that the Spirit is not promised to any one out of Christ," and on the contrary, if this statement is true, the Spirit is not in the word in any comprehensible sense.

But Mr. Campbell says: "The Spirit is promised to them that believe and obey Christ," to "assist them," to "help their infirmities," to "produce in them the fruits of 'love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, fidelity, meekness, temperance.'" How can this be, and the Spirit not be abstract from the word? And how can it be, and the individual not be conscious of it? If he is conscious of a divine "assistance," "joy, peace, love," has he not a direct witness of his acceptance with God, and is not that better testimony than such an assurance to be deduced from the fact of baptism?

But Mr. Campbell was forced to define himself more perfectly than he has done in the "Christian System." In his debate with Professor Rice, he affirmed the following proposition: "In conversion and

sanctification the Spirit of God operates on persons only through the word." Now, in order to get at his belief, there is only one term in the proposition that we need to have him define; namely, sanctification—this he defines\* as "a progressive work. To sanctify is to set apart; this may be done in a moment, and so far as mere state or relation is concerned it is as instantaneous as baptism. But there is the formation of a holy character; for there is a holy character as well as a holy state. The formation of such a character is the work of means. . . . Therefore it is the duty and work of Christians 'to perfect holiness in the fear of the Lord.' " So that by sanctification here is meant all the subsequent development and culture of the Christian character into ripeness for heaven.

This proposition therefore is explicit as teaching that the Holy Ghost does not operate directly or immediately upon the heart of either saint or sinner. We are led to believe that the controversies into which this man was drawn by his system of doctrine, compelled him to take a position consistent with himself. The "Christian System" was written some nine years before his discussion with Professor Rice. We may, for this reason consider the ideas advanced in his discussion with Dr. Rice as his more mature views, and these are the views usually held and inculcated by his followers.

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\* "Christian System," p. 65.

But the reader may ask, Do they then deny all experimental religion? Do they not believe in joy and peace as positive facts of Christian experience? They claim they do not, that they do believe in a religion felt in the heart. They even talk of the gifts of the Spirit—"love, joy, peace, meekness," and the like—as being the Christian's peculiar heritage, as see "*Christian System*," p. 267. But when they are questioned carefully as to their real meaning, it is discovered that this experience is altogether the result of subjective mental processes. That is to say, it is not wrought by any direct or personal communication of the Spirit, but is the result of personal belief, a mere deduction from the fact that they have obeyed what they suppose are the requirements in order to salvation. In other words, there is no spiritual change wrought by direct divine interposition, no witness of the Divine Spirit. But the change is altogether wrought by themselves, and the approval of their consciences for doing what they suppose is right, is the only source of "peace, joy, love," etc. So it is at once manifest that they do not mean what evangelical Christians do by a change of heart or conversion. While these last by conversion mean a twofold work—a work of the sinner in turning to God, and a work of God in pardoning and renewing by divine interposition—the followers of Campbell mean simply the turning about of the sinner, and the pardoning act of God, which takes place only in the divine mind ;

and the sinner's joy comes from believing it has taken place, because he has obeyed what he believes are the commandments in order to remission of sin.

Now, let it be observed that this is no operation of the Spirit in any reasonable sense. It is a misuse of language to speak of this being either operation or witness of the Spirit. It is simply the influence of the word in the convictions as it may be understood by a merely fallible being, and the Holy Spirit is in no proper sense present. All of this too, as has been before indicated, is the outgrowth of the doctrine that makes baptism a necessary condition to the pardon of sin. It is this legal system that compels the elimination of the Holy Ghost in his office of reproving, regenerating, witnessing, comforting, helping, from the "Christian System." For the sake of water baptism as a condition to remission of sins, the Church must be robbed of her heritage in the Holy Ghost.

But we will now review some of the arguments by which it is sought to maintain the doctrine that "in conversion and sanctification the Spirit of God operates on persons only through the word."\*

The first argument is what Mr. Campbell claims to adduce from the "constitution of the human mind."† In this connection he claims that "all our ideas of the sensible universe are the result of sensation and reflection," and "all our supernatural knowledge comes

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\* "Campbell and Rice," p. 611. † *Id.* pp. 617, 618.

wholly 'by faith,' and 'faith by hearing.'" . . . So that we have "(1) the word spoken, (2) hearing, (3) believing, (4) feeling, (5) doing." We are also told in this same connection that "faith is the belief of testimony," and is the "regenerating, justifying, sanctifying principle." It will be difficult for any one to see how, admitting these assumptions to be true, just as Campbell posits them, the immediate operation of the Holy Spirit is excluded. Suppose that with the word spoken, there goes a spiritual influence that does not go with any other than with God's revealed truth. There is nothing in the nature of the word or in the constitution of the human mind to preclude it. Is not this just what our Savior promises in John xvi, 7-11: "For if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart I will send him unto you. And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Of sin, because they believed not on me; of righteousness, because I go to my Father and ye see me no more; of judgment, because the prince of this world is judged." The obvious meaning of this passage is this, that the Comforter, in precisely the same personage that he was to come to the apostles, was to "reprove the world." It can not for one moment be denied that this is the personal Holy Spirit that here, under the appellation of "the Comforter," was promised to the apostles. And this additional fact must be taken into consideration in the interpretation of



this passage; namely, that the fundamental doctrines of the gospel were already in the world; but this divine "Advocate" was to come to be the advocate of God's cause with man—in his judgment, conscience, and heart—was to be sent by the Son from the Father.

Mr. Campbell says "feeling" comes by "believing or faith," and that "faith is the belief of testimony." Does believing the "testimony of the apostles" always and invariably produce "feeling?" This will hardly be maintained. If it does not, then what produces feeling at one time that at another does not? And again, is there any reason that can be assigned why God can not impress the moral or spiritual sensibilities aside from the truth? Let it not be forgotten that the argument proceeds on the assumption that there is something in the constitution of the human mind that precludes the possibility of the immediate impression of the Spirit. If it can be shown, as has been done above, that this is not necessarily so, and that nothing is more reasonable than that God, who is the author of the human spirit, can impress it, the whole argument falls to the ground as utterly baseless.

But the arguments of Campbellism are all aimed at a figment of their imagination. Those who believe in the operation of the Holy Ghost immediately upon the hearts of men, do not believe that this is done without and aside from any intellectual convictions,



from any belief whatever in moral truth. Intellectual belief comes from a knowledge of moral truth, and this belief is shaped by the knowledge, and upon this belief is founded conviction; and what is to prevent the Holy Ghost from making this belief the basis of a keen "reproof of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment?" When, therefore, Mr. Campbell said,\* "They have the spirit of God operating without testimony, without apprehension or comprehension, without sense, susceptibility, or feeling," he was either grossly ignorant of the views of the evangelical Churches, or he was indulging in special pleading wholly unworthy a controversy on matters so vitally important. The misfortune, however, is, that he has bequeathed a very large legacy of the same kind to his followers, who are wont to make the doctrine of the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost a subject of ridicule and irreverent contempt.

For a wholesale *ex cathedra* deliverance, that displays the spirit of an arrant dogmatist, the following can scarcely be excelled:† "I, therefore, *ex animo*, repudiate their whole theory of mystic influence and metaphysical regeneration as a vision of visions, a dream of dreams, at war with philosophy, with the philosophy of mind, with the Bible, with reason, with common sense, and with all Christian experience." If vociferous assertion would settle a question, this

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\* "Campbell and Rice," p. 619. † *Id.* p. 619.

whole dispute would have been settled long since ; for this is the method with which they customarily meet the question. It certainly is not unphilosophical to say God can directly impress human minds and hearts. He who made conscience to say, "Thou art guilty," "Thou art condemned," can make himself felt in conscience bringing pardon and peace. He who could "move holy men of old " to write his revelation to men, can certainly make penitent hearts to feel that their sins are pardoned. It certainly is not unscriptural to say, "The Spirit himself beareth witness with our spirits that we are the children of God." Nor is it contrary to Christian experience ; for the hymnody of the Christian ages bears testimony to the fact that it always has been the belief of Christians that Christ did send the Holy Spirit of promise to abide with the Church forever, and the only antagonism this doctrine meets is from this very modern source.

Mr. Campbell's second argument is characterized by the same total misapprehension of the real issue. He says : \* "Our second argument is deduced from the fact that no living man has ever been heard of, and none can now be found, possessed of a single conception of Christianity, of one spiritual thought, feeling, or emotion, where the Bible or some tradition from it has not been before him. Where the Bible has not been sent, or its traditions developed, there

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\* "Campbell and Rice," p. 619.

is not one single spiritual idea, word, or action." He then infers from these sweeping assumptions that the Holy Spirit has never operated on human hearts where the Bible or some truth from it has not gone, and then makes the following deduction: "If, then, he has never operated in this way where the Bible has never gone, who can prove that he so operates here where the Bible is enjoyed?" The assumptions contained in the first part of this quotation are not only wholly unsupported by the evidence, but they are positively contrary to fact. People who have not the Bible, and never had it, are not absolutely "without one spiritual thought, feeling, or emotion." The apostle Paul said of the heathen of his day, Rom. ii, 14, 15: "These having not the law are a law unto themselves, which show the work of the law written in their hearts, their conscience also bearing witness, and their thoughts the meanwhile accusing or excusing one another." And this has been found true of the heathen of all ages. If Campbell and his followers admit the salvation of any heathen without the gospel, they must admit that such as are saved must have had "spiritual thoughts, feelings, and emotions." The fact is, the Lord said of the antediluvians, and that, too, before a single word of the Scriptures had been written, Gen. vi, 3: "My Spirit shall not always strive with man." Heathenism has presented such spiritual characters as a Socrates, a Plato, an Epictetus, a Seneca, a Confucius, and undoubtedly an unnamed host

besides. How can these be accounted for if Campbell's assertions are true? Again, how can the intense, agonizing search after spiritual truth by the philosopher Justin and Clement of Alexandria be accounted for without admitting that they were following the leading of the Divine Spirit?

So far are these assertions from being true, that man everywhere, and in all ages, has given indication of an unsatisfied heart and a troubled conscience on the subject of his spiritual well-being. His smoking altars, his ministering priests, his hecatombs of bleeding victims, his prayers, his lustrations, his attempts at expiating his sins by his own sufferings, all give token that something troubles the soul of man in the directions essentially and only spiritual. What is it? Is it wholly intuitive? If it were intuitive, it could not be crushed out, as it often is, by those who prefer not its guidance, but choose the way of sin.

Furthermore, the deduction made from this false assumption concerning the heathen, that if the Spirit does not operate where the Bible is not, it can not be claimed that he operates where the Bible is, is a perfect *non sequitur*. It simply proves nothing. Mr. Campbell admits that in some indefinable way "the Holy Spirit is shed upon" the Christian "richly through Jesus Christ our Savior; of which the peace of mind, the love, joy, and hope of the regenerate is full proof." Now, if this means anything more than simply the Bible bringing to Christians promises of

peace, joy, love, etc., it is an immediate operation upon the heart by the Holy Ghost, along with, and additional to, the word.

But this is a matter to be settled by an appeal to God's Word, which will be fully made when once all these objections have been considered.

## CHAPTER XVI.

## OBJECTIONS CONSIDERED.

MR. CAMPBELL'S third objection to the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost, is based on the fact that those who claim this immediate work are not able to make any revelation additional to the one given in the Bible, and do not give any new spiritual insight to the revelation that was originally given. This objection is founded upon the assumption that the Holy Ghost can not operate on human hearts, except to reveal new doctrinal truth or to give a supernatural insight into the truth already revealed. We are clearly taught in 1 Cor. xii, that "there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit;" and in verse 13, "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit." Here is an immediate operation of the Spirit called a baptism, which came certainly to some that did not have any new truth to reveal, or any supernatural light to furnish upon truth already revealed.

Mr. Campbell admits, and his followers likewise, that the Holy Ghost in an immediate impartation came to the Church in apostolic days. It fell on the household of Cornelius, was imparted by the laying on of



the apostle's hands, in fact was enjoyed by very many who never felt, and never received any new revelation. If this is so, the objection amounts to nothing, and the facts prove that the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost is not confined to the work of the giving of a revelation.

The immediate operation of the Holy Ghost in his reproving office is to quicken conscience, and enforce upon it the claims of truth and righteousness; in his office in regeneration it is to cleanse the heart and conscience from sin and guilt; in other words, to create the penitent believer anew in Christ Jesus, and to bear witness that the sins are forgiven, and that the believer is adopted into the family of God. Is not this a reasonable theory? And is there any necessity in all this for a new revelation of spiritual truths? When Jesus told the sick of the palsy and the sinning woman, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," there was no new revelation in this, save and except one to their hearts; and since he has gone to heaven, has it become impossible for him to say the same to human hearts by the Holy Ghost?

Mr. Campbell's fourth argument is especially directed against the Presbyterian view of regeneration; namely, that it is the work of the Spirit that precedes repentance, and is the effectual call of the elect sinner to repentance. With this mistaken view we have nothing to do, and should have passed the objection by did not he and some of the exponents of his views

regard it an objection valid against all who believe in the immediate operation of the Holy Ghost on human hearts. When he says: \* “If then the Spirit of God, without faith, without the knowledge of the gospel, in any case regenerates an individual, he does so in all cases. But if faith in God or knowledge of Christ is essential in one case, it is essential in every other case.” Here is a complete misapprehension of the doctrine advocated by Arminians at least. Arminians do not believe that the Spirit of God, “without any knowledge or without any faith” of any sort, ever convicts the sinner or regenerates the penitent. Some knowledge of moral truth and some faith in the good exists wherever a soul is found seeking after truth. If there is no regeneration under such circumstances, then the heathen are all lost, or some get to heaven without being born again. If “a knowledge of Christ is essential in every case” to regeneration, how are the heathen saved, and how are those saved who lived before Christ, and just how much knowledge of Christ is essential now? This is an objection that cuts every way.

Wherever there is faith in the good, however darkened the knowledge, there is faith in God—a faith that, with Christian knowledge, would take hold of Christ as the Savior of sinners. Such a faith will bring regeneration in all cases.

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\* “Campbell and Rice,” p. 620.

His fifth, sixth, and seventh arguments, so-called, consist simply in asserting, because gospel truth was revealed by the Holy Spirit in human language, that therefore human language thus indited is to be the only means of converting sinners. The Comforter of John xiv, 15, 16, is translated *Advocate*, because he believes this translation best harmonizes with his idea that the Spirit's entire influence is to be confined to the naked word. He says:\* "Now, as the Spirit is to advocate Christ's cause he must use means. Hence, when Jesus gives him the work of conviction, he furnishes him with suitable and competent arguments to effect the end of his mission. He was to convince the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. In accomplishing this he was to argue from three topics: 1. The unbelief of the world; 2. Christ's reception into heaven; 3. The dethronement of his great adversary, the prince of this world."

A comment more utterly fanciful can hardly be conceived; yet this comment is heard always, with but little modification, in the mouths of his followers. The plain, simple question is: Does the Savior, by the *Paraclete*, here mean the Person of the Holy Ghost, or does he mean only the inspired Word? If he means the latter, why did he not use the term that is plain and comprehensible—the Word? Nothing could be more calculated to mislead than the term

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\* "Campbell and Rice," p. 622.

here made use of, if this theory of interpretation be correct. Attention has already been called to the fact that the fundamental doctrines of the gospel were at that time in the world, and therefore they could not be sent. But Mr. Campbell says "the *advocate* must use means." In what way? Was he simply to reveal truth, or was he also to enforce truth already revealed and to be revealed? If the latter, how then was it to be done but by direct spiritual impression upon the minds and hearts of men? Is the Holy Spirit limited only to words of human language as means to reach the hearts and consciences of men? But to the Savior's promises to settle this matter—John xiv, 16-17: "And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter [*Paraclete*], that he may abide with you forever; even the Spirit of truth, whom the world can not receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him. But ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." The personal pronouns "he" and "him," here used, clearly establish the personality of this promised gift. His taking the place of Christ with the disciples—"with" them and "in" them—indicates most conclusively that it was not words of truth the Savior was promising, but a conscious divine presence. The declared inability of the world to receive him, at once proves that it was not the word of truth about which the Savior was speaking; for this word the world can receive and know, inasmuch as it is revealed for that

very purpose. According to Mr. Campbell, sinners 1st. Hear the word; 2d. Believe; 3d. Obey. He therefore can in no wise assert that the world can not receive the word of God. Again, this Divine Companion was to abide with the disciples of Christ forever. How? Not as a revealer of new truth, but as a Comforter. And, lastly, he already dwelt with them in some of his gracious offices; but should hereafter—after the Pentecost—be “in them” as a continual abiding guest. In verse 26th of this same chapter we have the Comforter clearly designated as to personality: “But the Comforter, *which* is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you.” Here, also, his office of teacher of things already revealed is set forth. It is not the naked truth already given, left to itself; but this truth “called to remembrance,” and its demands, obligations, promises, and hopes given force and effectiveness by the Divine Spirit’s presence. It is to quicken men’s spiritual faculties that the Spirit is present.

In ch. xv, 26, we have still another office of the Comforter defined: “But when the Comforter is come, whom I will send unto you from the Father, *even* the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father, he shall testify of me.” The Revised Version reads: “He shall bear witness of me.” It is his office to bear witness to our adoption (Rom. viii, 16); *i. e.*, to



Christ as indeed the Savior of sinners in the pardon of our sins.

In ch. xvi, 7-11, his office as a reprover of sin is clearly set forth: "He shall reprove the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." The only question of dispute in reference to the meaning of this text is, Does it mean that the Holy Ghost shall only "reprove the world" by means of the naked word, or does it mean that the personal influence of the Spirit shall attend that word to men's consciences and hearts? It is certain that, in whatever sense this Divine Personage was sent to the disciples, in that same sense he was to be in "the world" to "reprove" it. That is to say, if as a personal presence and power he came to the disciples in his several offices towards them, he also, as a personal presence, was to be in his *reproving* office toward sinners. The offices of the Spirit toward the disciples and the world are relatively different, but the personal power and influence is the same. It is He, "the Spirit himself," or else the very means about which Mr. Campbell has so much to say—the words of the Spirit—are misleading and completely bewildering.

The inference made by Mr. Campbell that, because symbolical tongues of flame rested upon the heads of the disciples at Pentecost, and because they were enabled to speak with tongues, that therefore, under the gospel dispensation, the only agency toward the conversion of men was to be the words of the gospel, is



certainly not a legitimate one. Again, it may be asked, Why may not the Spirit attend those words wherever read, preached, or heard? Why may not the Spirit make them more effective in conscience than they otherwise would be? And why may not the Spirit bear witness to those that accept the gospel that they are accepted of God? Is there any necessary conflict between these two facts that makes them incompatible? Yet this seems to be the whole burden of the arguments of Campbellism, that the *mediate* use of the word at once sets aside the *immediate* office of the Spirit. The persistency with which this inconsequential argument is alleged is quite discouraging for those who have faith in the ability of the human mind to grasp truth with discrimination.

Another argument made by the advocates of this theory is founded upon those passages of Scripture that ascribe regeneration, sanctification, and cleansing to the instrumentality of the word. 1 Peter i, 23: "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." James i, 18: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." 1 Cor. iv, 15: "For, though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." John xvii, 17: "Sanctify them through the truth,"—and others; but these will suffice, for the same answer

will be pertinent to each and all. It is the old answer, already repeatedly given, that the admission of the word of truth, as an instrumentality to salvation, does not necessarily exclude other agencies. If it did, it would exclude Christ as the meritorious means, as well as the Holy Ghost as the efficacious means. But the "word" or "gospel," here spoken of, is not the New Testament Scriptures, as these persons suppose, but simply the doctrine of salvation through Christ. In other words, that "God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself."\* This was the gospel that was preached "before unto Abraham,"† and also to those who fell in the wilderness.‡ So, it was not the "word" as understood by Campbell and his followers, but the truth of the gospel simply in germ, but vitalized by the Holy Spirit, that saved them. Again, James i, 18, presents these two agencies—the personal Spirit and the instrumentality—together: "Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." So the apostle Paul says: "In Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel." Here are three agencies—a divine meritorious agency, a human preacher, and the gospel truth. In 1 Peter i, 22, 23, we have the relation of the efficacious agency and the instrumentality most clearly presented: "Seeing ye have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit unto unfeigned love of the breth-

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\* 2 Cor. v, 19. † Gal. iii, 8. ‡ Heb. iv, 2 and 6.

ren, love one another with a pure heart fervently; being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever." Here it is distinctly stated that their purification was through the agency of the Spirit—"purified your souls through the Spirit in obeying the truth." What is this "incorruptible seed," of which they were born again? Not the word, for they were "born of" this "through the word;" that is, by two agencies—"the incorruptible seed" and "the word"—one efficacious, the other instrumental. But it may be asked: "Is it not the teaching of the passage that 'the incorruptible seed' is 'the word?' for it is said to 'live and abide forever.'" The Revised Version, in the margin, undoubtedly gives the true reading: "Through the word of God, *who* liveth and abideth." It is "God *who* liveth and abideth." Certain it is that if "living and abiding" defines the "word," then "incorruptible seed" does not define it. "Born of God,"\* "born of the Spirit,"† and "born from above,"‡ are the Divine expressions for the blessed state described by Peter. Never "born of the word," but "through the word" "by the gospel," clearly discriminating between instrumentality and efficacious agency.

Mr. Campbell, in his discussion with Professor Rice, offers five more so-called arguments. It may be here

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\* 1 John v, 1. † John iii, 6. ‡ John iii, 3.

stated that his arguments are selected for review, because he usually presents them in a better style than subsequent exponents of his theory, who have slavishly patterned after this man both in doctrines and methods of defense. He who reads "Campbell and Rice's Debate," "Christianity Restored," or "The Millennial Harbinger," will have absolutely all of Campbellism, both creed and arguments.

The five arguments referred to above, are in brief as follows: First. Paul was commissioned to "open the blind eyes" of the Gentiles, and turn them from darkness unto light.\* Second. "Whatever is ascribed to the Holy Spirit in the work of salvation is ascribed to the word."† Third. "Those who resisted the word of God are said to resist the Spirit of God."‡ Fourth. "That the strivings of the prophets by their words, are represented as the strivings of the Holy Spirit."‡ Fifth. "God nowhere has operated without his *word*, either in the old creation or in the new."‡ The first four of these supposed arguments are only a repetition in a slightly different form of the idea, that the affirmation of mediate instrumentality contradicts the personal agency of the Spirit, and proves that he operates only by means of his word. This has been so fully refuted before that only a passing glance at the new examples cited is required. If Paul as an instrumentality opening the blind eyes of the

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\* Acts xxvi, 18. † "Campbell and Rice," p. 749. ‡ *Id.* 750.

Gentiles proves that mediate means alone were used, it proves too much, for that would exclude the word, for the work is all ascribed to Paul. But it may be said that he was to preach the word. So he was, but with power sent down from above. He "received the Holy Ghost" when Ananias laid his hand on him, and received his sight at the same time. (Acts ix, 17.) He tells us, in 1 Cor. ii, 4, how he preached the gospel, and what made it efficacious. "And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power;" iii, 6, "I planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase."

And so also, in pre-Christian ages, "the Spirit of the Lord God anointed" prophets "to preach the gospel."\* It was not naked word or words unattended by spiritual power, but the word made efficient by the Holy Ghost.

The last of these five alleged arguments is simply the wholesale denial of one part of the question at issue; namely, that the Holy Ghost does operate separate and apart from any knowledge, moral or spiritual, but not, as he alleges, apart from the Bible plan of salvation. If this position is true, then it follows that the heathen are all lost; or if any are saved, they are saved without any spiritual interposition whatever in their behalf, and without any regeneration, as already shown.

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\* Isa. lxi, 1.

And, furthermore, the devil has more influence in this world than the Almighty; for he can, according to the teaching of the Bible, tempt men to sin, while God can not help them, except he can secure some one to go to them with the Bible.

All the arguments of Campbellism have passed in review, and they are to be summed up in just two assumptions:

1. That the presentation of the mediate means—the word—sets aside the immediate agency of the Holy Spirit.

2. That none have been impressed or regenerated by the Spirit, who have not had the Bible or some part of it. The first of these is a very obvious *non sequitur*, and the second is false as to fact, and leaves the vast majority of men in absolute darkness, and without the possibility of any fitness for heaven.



## CHAPTER XVII.

## OFFICES AND WORK OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THE writer is constrained to believe that had not logical consistency required it, Alexander Campbell would never have put himself so squarely in antagonism to all other evangelical Christians, as he has done in reference to the offices and work of the Holy Ghost. His whole argument in the discussion with Professor Rice, as well as his treatment of the subject in "The Christian System," seems to be shaped so as to fence against the inevitable charge of a denial of all spiritual impression outside of the moral and intellectual influence of the Scriptures upon the minds of men. But consistency compels the elimination of all spiritual impression or impact from a system that has for a fundamental condition to salvation a mere rite, as baptism; and makes the performance of that rite along with intellectual belief, repentance, and confession the evidence of pardon. For were the witness of the Spirit admitted, and were the conditions performed, and the witness of the Spirit did not follow, then this fact would be proof that the conditions were not fulfilled, and the person seeking remission of sins would be compelled to repeat them until the Spirit's

witness was given. And, on the other hand, there would be left no room for a denial of the witness of the Spirit, as claimed by those who, according to this theory have not fulfilled the conditions; that is, have not been baptized by immersion for the remission of sins.

But it is marvelous that a system so beset with difficulties in explaining the Scripture teachings concerning the work of the Holy Ghost, and that demands that the Church of the Christian dispensation be robbed of the personal divine presence, should find so many supporters. The system runs atilt against very many plain and obvious passages of Scripture, and is out of harmony with the whole scope of the divine plan for the world's evangelization. The Scriptures teach that Father, Son, and Holy Ghost are each in his divine personality engaged in the work of bringing sinners back to righteousness and the favor of God. The Father provides the plan and sends the Son, and Father and Son send the Holy Ghost. If the Holy Ghost is in the world in any sense different from the divine omnipresence, it must be by spiritual manifestation, and this spiritual manifestation is not simply the presence of some words revealed eighteen hundred years ago; for in that sense he has been in the world from the time of the promise made to our first parents.

It is hard to conceive that any one can really bring himself to believe that the only presence of the Holy

Ghost in the world is the presence of the Bible in the world. The Bible is no more the Spirit of God than the writings of a man are his spirit, and yet when the doctrine of Campbellism in this respect is disrobed of the Scriptural verbiage in which they seek to clothe it, the sum and substance of it is this: The Holy Spirit gave the Word, and put all the power and effectiveness that it has in it when he gave it; and since then in no sense is he with it any more than the deceased writer is in his words now. So that whatever of conviction the sinner is made to receive comes from the Word alone; and whatever of comfort, joy, and peace the prayerful saint receives, is derived from the naked promises of the Word, by process of intellectual deduction—a very cold and cheerless doctrine, sufficient to chill the ardor of the most devout saint. But, thanks be to our gracious Father, the saint knows it is not true.

We will now consider the offices of the Holy Ghost, as set forth in the Scriptures: 1. The source of inspiration. 2. The source of miraculous gifts. These are special manifestations, and ceased with the giving of divine revelation. 3. Reproving the sinner. 4. Regenerating, baptizing, cleansing, purifying, sanctifying, sealing the penitent believer. 5. Witnessing to his adoption. 6. Comforting, helping, teaching the saint.

Now, all these offices, except the first two, are in a diversity of ways set forth in the Scriptures as be-

longing to the entire gospel dispensation. Far back, toward the morning of human history, God said: "My Spirit shall not always strive with men."\* So the Psalmist, David, under intense conviction for his great sin, prayed: "Take not thy Holy Spirit from me."† This was the reproving Spirit to which he was clinging, for he immediately prays: "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation, and uphold me with thy free Spirit."‡ So also the Savior promised that when the Holy Ghost came in fuller manifestation on the day of Pentecost, he should thereafter "*reprove* the world of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." The impossibility of this being in any other sense than by personal impression is seen in the fact that it was the Comforter that was to come on Pentecost, that was to do this work; and that manifestation is confessedly a personality. The word as an instrumentality had already in great measure come. This also is the same office that is set forth in 2 Thess. ii, 13: "God hath from the beginning chosen you to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth;" and 1 Peter, i, 2: "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God, the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit unto obedience, and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ." In these two passages the Holy Spirit, by his convicting agency, is said to set apart the sinner to faith, cleansing, and salvation. Both the Holy

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\* Gen. vi, 3. † Ps. li, 11. ‡ Ps. li, 12.

Spirit and the truth are mentioned; the inference is therefore necessary, that these refer to two separate agencies, the one operating on the mind and judgment, the other on heart and conscience. It is appropriate to remark at this juncture that the Spirit's sanctifying work is continuous, so long as the sinner permits; that is, begun in consecration, it continues on through regeneration and throughout the entire life. It is the Spirit's work to sanctify, to make holy—*sanctus*, holy; *facere*, to make. And this begins with the first impression made by the Spirit and yielded to by the sinner, and continues on until the great work is wrought in a character symmetrical in righteousness.

In Acts xvi, 14, we have a most unanswerable example of an immediate divine influence operating upon the hearts outside the word, and even before the word, as a preparation for its honest reception. "And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshiped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things that were spoken of Paul." Could the preparatory influence of the Divine Spirit be more clearly set forth? The Lord *opened her heart*, so that she attended to the word of truth. It was not the word that "*opened her heart*," for that came afterward; and the divine influence was the cause of her listening with attention to that word. With this fact of inspired history agree the declarations of Paul concerning the success of his ministry in reaching men.



In 1 Cor. iii, 6, he says: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase." How did Paul plant? The word of truth in the minds of his hearers; and in the same manner Apollos watered it. How did God give the increase? By his Spirit operating with this word on human hearts in conviction, entreaty, and reproof. He "reproved of sin" because they believed not in Christ; "of righteousness," because the Son of God was no longer in the world as a teacher of men, but had committed this work to the Holy Ghost; "of judgment," because the prince of this world—that is, the ruling spirit of this world—should be brought under condemnation in the hearts of men by the Spirit of God.

The Scriptures ascribe to the immediate work of the Spirit regeneration, baptism, cleansing, purifying, sanctifying, sealing. These terms represent aspects of the same work wrought in the heart of the believing penitent, and present an overwhelming body of proof of personal contact of the Divine Spirit with the spirit of the believer. The terms, with possibly one exception, sanctification, contain the idea of actual impact. Regeneration is a radical change implying divine power; baptism is an impartation of the baptismal element to the subject; cleansing and purifying, as conceptions, have their origin in the fact of actual contact with a cleansing element; and sealing is the direct impression of the seal upon the instrument attested thereby. Unless we have, in the plain



narratives and in the unembellished discussions of the Scriptures, the boldest metaphors and the wildest hyperboles, we must regard these expressions as setting forth facts of personal experience, and as referring to impressions made not by an instrumentality, but by the personal spirit.

Regeneration is the translation of the Greek *παλιγγενεσία*, which occurs twice in the New Testament (Matt. xix, 28; Titus iii, 5); but it can scarcely be called in question that *γεννάω ἄνωθεν* ("born from above") of John iii; *ἐκ τοῦ Θεοῦ γεννάω* ("born of God") of John v, 1, and others; and *ἀναγεννάω* ("being born again") of 1 Peter i, 23, refer to precisely the same thing. The phrases, "begotten of God," in John v, 1, and 18, are translations of the same word that in that chapter and elsewhere is translated "born of God." So also "begotten again" in 1 Peter i, 3, is a translation of the same word rendered "born again" in 1 Pet. i, 23. When, therefore, Mr. Campbell attempts to make a distinction between being "begotten of God," and being "born of God," as he does in "Christian System," pp. 201 and 207, he makes a distinction where there is absolutely no difference. Being born of God and being begotten of God are one and the same thing, and present the whole divine process from the first to the last. *Γεννάω*, in the active voice, may express the divine side, the Spirit's work, while the passive voice expresses the result, which is a new birth; not a mere begetting, a begin-

ning of life, but the transition into the complete new life. It is but little short of ridiculous to talk of "first begotten with Spirit, impregnated with the word, and then born of the water."\* It may support his theory, but it is a long remove from being Scriptural.

Regeneration is essentially a spiritual process. The Savior's first declaration is: "Except a man be born from above, he can not see the kingdom of God." *Ἀνωθεν* does not mean again; and how any one can say that "Nicodemus plainly understood it in the sense of *again*," because he replies, "How can a man be born again when he is old? He can not enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born," is to the writer marvelous. If *ἄνωθεν* was understood by him in the sense of *again*, he would have repeated it both times with the verb *γεννάω*. But the rendering is not necessarily essential to the argument. "Born again," as defined by the Savior, is a spiritual work: "That which is born of the flesh, is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit." As has been shown in a former chapter, "born of the water," spoken of in verse 5, is no part of the spiritual process, for it is not named where the result of the work is spoken of in verse 6; namely, "that which is born of the Spirit, is spirit," or spiritual. It should read, "That which is born of water and the Spirit, is spirit," if water is anything more than a symbol in the pro-

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\* "Christian System," p. 201.

cess, and the essential part of it, according to Campbell and his followers.

In verse 8 the mysteriousness of the spiritual process is evinced by the Divine Teacher. "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh or whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." Mr. Braden, in his debate with Dr. Hughey, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, rendered this: "The Spirit breathes where he pleases, and you hear his voice; you can not tell whence he comes and whither he goes. In this way is every one begotten who is begotten of the Spirit."\* For a wholly gratuitous manipulation of the sacred record to make it fit into a preconceived theory, it is doubtful if its like can be found. What is the imaginary basis of this rendering? *Πνεῦμα*, translated wind, is also the word used for spirit; and then it is assumed that *πνέω* may be translated to breathe, although uncompounded with the preposition *ἐν*, it is never used for breathe in the New Testament; and *φωνήν* may be translated voice. But let us look at this translation, and see if it teaches anything. In what sense does the Spirit "breathe where he pleases," and how do we "hear his voice;" how is it that we "are not able to tell whence he comes and whither he goes;" and how does all this describe the spiritual birth wrought by water? It is

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\* "Hughey and Braden Debate," p. 461.

to be observed, if their theory of regeneration is the correct one, we know all about the *breathing, going, and coming* of the Spirit. Again, what unjustifiable liberty is taken with the text, when the last sentence is translated "in this way is every one begotten who is begotten of the Spirit." Where, in the text, does he find the words "who is begotten?" There is not one word in the text to answer to this phrase. A theory must be badly beset to be compelled to resort to such a handling of the inspired text.

The obvious meaning to any one who has not a theory to sustain, is, that the mysterious movement of the wind recognized by the physical hearing as fact, is a symbol of the operation of the Spirit in the work of regeneration, felt in the experience of the soul, but still incomprehensible in the mode of its impartation.

Mr. Campbell has a saying in regard to this matter that is uniformly repeated by his followers, and is believed by them to be finally crushing as an argument. It is this: "All must admit that no one can be born again of that which he receives."\* So also "To call the receiving of any Spirit, or any influence, or energy, or any operation on the heart of man, regeneration, is an abuse of speech, as well as a departure from the diction of the Holy Spirit, *who calls nothing regeneration, except the act of immersion.*" † The

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\* "Christian System," p. 20. † *Id.* pp. 202, 202.

writer has carefully pondered the dictum, to get, if possible, an inkling of its meaning, and an apprehension of some of the logical force that is supposed to belong to it; but has entirely failed. Why can not the dead sinner be born again out of sin unto righteousness by receiving the quickening Spirit? "For it is the Spirit that quickeneth."\* "Even when we were dead in sins hath quickened us together with Christ."† So also Col. ii, 13; 2 Cor. iii, 6. But let us apply this dictum to Mr. Campbell's theory. Penitent believers receive the word of the gospel. Acts viii, 14; xi, 1; xvii, 11, *et al.*; and yet these persons tell us that we are born again of the word. "The word of God is the seed of which we are born again, or renewed in heart and life."‡ So, Mr. Campbell being judge, we can be born of what we receive. More than this, baptism is something received, something in which the candidate is passive. Hence the command to sinners is to be baptized. He speaks of the "act of immersion" being the new birth; but whose act?—the candidate's? No. The administrator's. The candidate receives the immersion at his hands, and if this is a new birth he is born of what he receives.

In entire agreement with the essential spirituality of this new birth is the teaching of the apostle Paul in Titus iii, 5, 6. "Not by works of righteousness

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\* John vi, 63. † Eph. ii, 5. ‡ "Campbell and Rice," p. 664.



which we have done, but according to his mercy hath he saved us by the washing of regeneration, and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior."

Mr. Campbell and his followers may make much of the fact that commentators generally understand that a reference is made to baptism in the phrase "washing of regeneration." It is far from being clear that such is the case. Commentators generally follow in the trend of thought or opinion marked out by their predecessors. Baptismal regeneration has been taught for many centuries by the Church of Rome. It was therefore natural that her commentators should see this doctrine in all passages where regeneration was spoken of, and especially where it was spoken of as a "washing." The Church of England, and the Protestant bodies of Europe generally adopted this error of the Church of Rome. Hence it is not at all strange that commentators generally should conceive that baptism is here referred to; and their successors who were in Churches that do not accept the dogma of baptismal regeneration, should be inclined, if possible, to accommodate their opinions with views so uniformly put forth. But is it not time that we should break away from the trammels of mediæval interpretation, and determine these by common sense principles? The very language of the text implies that nothing physical is referred to. "The washing of regeneration" is put in direct antithesis to "works of



righteousness" which we have done. If so, it (baptism) is not "the washing of regeneration," because that is contrasted with it. Also, we are told that this "washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost" is something God has done; now, what we have done and what God has done are in contrast—in logical antithesis. Again, whatever it was that saved us, was of him. "*He saved us.*" How? By what "*he shed on us abundantly,*" through Jesus Christ our Savior. Our baptism by water is something *he* did not do; but the washing of regeneration was something that he *did* perform. It really does appear that no stronger language or more forceful presentation could be used to exclude baptism by water.

But it may be asked, Why use the term "washing?" To answer this it is sufficient to ask why not use the term baptism, if that is what is meant? Campbell and his followers say "baptism is the washing of regeneration." The fact is, washing is used with justification when it is clearly defined, as by the Spirit, 1 Cor. vi, 11: "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God."

But suppose, for the sake of the argument, that baptism is alluded to in the phrase "washing of regeneration," does the passage not emphatically teach us that "the Holy Ghost is shed" upon those that

are saved, and that it is by this we are saved, because this is what God does of "his mercy?" Now, if this doctrine that denies the immediate impression of the Holy Ghost in the work of regeneration be true, and the "renewing of the Holy Ghost" is the influence of the word, leading to faith and repentance, it follows that we are saved first by the renewing of the Holy Ghost, then by the "washing of regeneration;" that is, the renewing must come before the baptism. In other words, as before shown, we must be born of the Spirit, or "begotten of the Word," in the style of these teachers before we are "born of the water."

In fact, no theory of interpretation is more profoundly beset with difficulties, and more effectually plunges its advocates into an inextricable tangle of absurdities than does this that makes baptism an essential part of the work of regeneration, and, because of this, eliminates the immediate influence of the Spirit from any part of the work.

In harmony with this conception of a spiritual birth into the kingdom of Christ, is the conception of quickening, met with in several instances in the Scriptures. Eph. ii, 4, 5: "But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ." The Greek *ζωοποιέω* really means to give life; a term of very radical significance when applied to the new birth. It is also clearly defined in the context, in the trend of the apostle's discussion.

The apostle parenthetically says, in the same verse: "By grace are ye saved;" and then, in verses 8-10, says: "For by grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God: not of works, lest any man should boast. For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." Now, here it is first said our salvation is not of ourselves; and in the second place, "not of works;" and in the third place, that spiritually "we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works." No language could more effectually teach the immediate work of the Spirit in our salvation than does this.

Then, following on in the same discussion, the apostle says, verse 18: "For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father." "Through him" means through Christ. It is through Christ, and by the agency of the Spirit, we are saved, and, as children, are permitted to approach the Father; for "likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered."\* If the apostle is here simply aiming to teach the *mediate* work of the Spirit through the word alone, he has certainly employed strange language for a subject so easy of statement as this—"quickeneth," "created," "access

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\* Rom. viii, 26.

to God," and in verse 20, "a habitation of God through the Spirit." It is difficult to find language, even in the visions of the prophets, more purely hyperbolical than this, if the apostle only means the effect of the word on the judgments and consciences of men.

## CHAPTER XVIII.

## BAPTISM OF THE HOLY GHOST.

THE baptism of the Holy Ghost, which, according to the Inspired Word, “washes,” “cleanses,” “purifies,” “sanctifies,” “seals,” and “anoints,” is employed in these several forms of representation to teach the immediate contact of the Holy Spirit with the soul in the work of regeneration and sanctification.

But right at this point Campbellism is prolific of contradictions. First, its followers deny that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is the “gift of the Holy Ghost” promised to the Church. Secondly, that this baptism was designed to be perpetual in the Church. There are some very cogent reasons, in the scheme of doctrine they advocate, why they should maintain this. The baptism of the Holy Ghost is something that makes sad havoc with the idea of an exclusive, dipping baptism; and to perpetuate the baptism of the Holy Ghost in the Church as a reality would make very forceful the doctrine inculcated by the advocates of affusion in general, that water baptism is designed to be a perpetual symbol of the purifying ministration of the Spirit, and not a representation of a death and burial—and that the death and burial of Christ. And, again, a baptism of the Holy Ghost,

cleansing from sin, stands in the way of remission of sin, grounded in water baptism as an essential condition. For if a direct communication of the Spirit were a requisite in each case of regeneration, such communication must be a necessary concomitant of water baptism, else there would be a conflict. So that it is true that, with logical consistency, Campbellism must deny to the Church this her heritage in the gospel.

But lest it be thought that this is a misrepresentation of their views, a few quotations from approved authors among them will be given. Mr. Braden says: \* "All who pray for a baptism of the Spirit now, pray not according to knowledge of the word, for that they never will receive. Those who pray for it and claim it, should show that it was promised to all believers in all time; that they can work miracles, as all could who were thus baptized anciently. This baptism was extraordinary, and has ceased." Another author says: † "In the first place, the work of the Holy Spirit in the salvation of sinners, is not once, in all the Bible, called the baptism of the Spirit. Let the reader remember this. Secondly, the baptism of the Holy Spirit was only promised to the apostles; and, thirdly, Jesus emphatically said the world could not receive the Holy Spirit in this form. (See John

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\* "Hughey and Braden Debate," p. 458.

† Browder's "Pulpit," pp. 96, 97.



xiv, 16, 17.)” The writer has had several discussions with accepted exponents of their doctrine, and has found them uniformly to maintain the theory above given. It is very evident to the thoughtful reader that if the baptism of the Holy Ghost is, as these persons claim, a miracle-working endowment alone, it must not only be limited to the apostolical days, but must be limited in those days to those who wrought miracles. Hence, an effort is made to show that the baptism given on Pentecost was confined to the twelve apostles. Professor McGarvey, in his commentary on Acts, *sub loco*, says that the antecedent of *they* in Acts ii is the twelve apostles. “It would read thus: ‘The lot fell upon Matthias, and he was numbered together with the eleven apostles. And when the day of Pentecost was fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.’ It is indisputable that the antecedent to *they* is the term *apostles*.” This entirely gratuitous assumption is made to save a theory. If *they* is limited to the twelve apostles, where, at this time, were Mary, the mother of Jesus, and the rest of the one hundred and twenty mentioned in ch. i, 15? Were they with one accord in another place? They had been meeting with the apostles. On what authority are they now counted out? Be it remembered that the pronoun *they*, in the first verse of this chapter, defines simply the assembly, and, if this comment is correct, the rest of the one hundred and twenty must be excluded from the assembly. It will be a startling

revelation to many Christians to learn that only the twelve apostles were present on the day of Pentecost.

But there are other insuperable objections to this interpretation. In ch. i, 4, 5, Jesus said to the assembled disciples on the day of ascension: "But wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence." When and how was this promise made? By the prophets Joel and John the Baptist. Joel ii, 28: "And it shall come to pass afterward that I will pour out my Spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, and your young men shall see visions." The Baptist, in Matt. iii, 11: "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." Observe now to whom this promise was made, and the tenor of it: "I will pour out my Spirit upon *all flesh*." Not upon the twelve apostles, nor upon a few Jews, and then upon a few Gentiles of the household of Cornelius, but "upon *all flesh*." So also in the promise, as given by the Baptist, we have the same comprehensiveness: "He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost." Did the Baptist teach that Christ should only baptize the twelve apostles? Here is another troublesome pronoun for Professor McGarvey, which it will be ex-

ceedingly difficult to limit sufficiently to save the theory from helpless ruin. Again, "*the promise*" that is spoken of in ch. i, 4, is also spoken of in ch. ii, 38, 39: "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord your God shall call." Now, Campbellite expositors are wont to make a distinction between the gift of the Holy Ghost and the baptism of the Holy Ghost.\* But *the promise* spoken of by the Savior was the baptism of the Holy Ghost; this promise Peter told his hearers was unto them and unto their children, "and to all that are afar off," and this promise he had just called the "gift of the Holy Ghost." He certainly did not mean the word of divine truth, for if they repented and confessed Christ, and were baptized, as these persons teach, they had before these acts received the word of truth. The promise was something they were to receive as a realization afterwards. Again, the baptism of the Holy Ghost on the household of Cornelius is—Acts x, 45—called the "gift of the Holy Ghost," and in ch. xv, 8, it is called the witness to their hearts of their adoption into the kingdom of Christ. "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as he did unto us." In ch. xi, 16, 17, this outpouring of the Holy Ghost is

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\* See "McGarvey on Acts," Browder's "Pulpit," p. 51.

both called a baptism and "the like gift as unto us," and the promise of the Savior was especially referred to. So also the apostle Paul says to his Ephesian brethren, Eph. i, 13: "After that ye believed ye were also sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." The promised baptism, or gift of the Holy Spirit, is a *seal* and *witness* to all Christians.

But to make assurance on this matter overwhelmingly sure, we have the universality of this baptism affirmed in language so complete that it is marvelous that any one should attempt to advocate a theory so squarely contradicted by divine inspiration. It is not possible to make a stronger statement of the universality of Holy Ghost baptism on the Church of Christ than is found in 1 Cor. xii, 13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." Here is a formulated statement of a truth. The "one body" is the Church of Christ; that is, his spiritual body. And all who are "in Christ" have obtained this blessed relation by baptism, "by one Spirit," "whether Jews or Gentiles, bond or free."

It is sought to break the force of this plain text by a new rendering of the text. Mr. Braden hints at it:\* "By the direction of one Spirit, or in accordance to the command of the Spirit, we are baptized," that

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\* "Hughey and Braden," p. 462.

is, by water. Mr. Browder says:\* “The Greek preposition *en* is employed to express *agency* or *authority*; hence, by the authority of one Spirit you were all baptized into one body.” In the first place, by the *agency* of, and by the *authority* of, are two radically different ideas, and the “therefore” of the supposed explanation is a total *non sequitur*. To confound *author* and *agent* is a piece of exegetical legerdemain that we can not permit to pass unnoticed. In the second place, the preposition ἐν, with the dative ἐν Πνεύματι, defines instrumentality, and is precisely the phraseology that is used everywhere the baptism of the Holy Ghost is spoken of. In Matt. iii, 11, ἐν Πνεύματι ἁγίῳ. So also Mark i, 8; Luke iii, 16; John i, 33; Acts i, 5, and xi, 16. If, then, ἐν means “by the authority of,” we shall have some choice reading in these passages. Take a sample, Matt. iii, 11: “He shall baptize you by the authority of the Holy Ghost and fire.” The reader may ask, Are these scholars that attempt these manipulations of the text in the interest of a theory? They claim to be, and are put forward as exponents of this doctrine. They also speak with great positiveness in promulgating their interpretations of the inspired text.

But there is still another way of a more recent discovery, by which it is sought to avoid the difficulty. D. R. Dungan, president of Drake University, at Des

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† Browder’s “Pulpit,” p. 77.



Moines, Iowa, in a little romance written by him in advocacy of this theory of doctrine, makes his heroine to say \* of the promise contained in Acts ii, 17: "With a literal translation it would read, '*I will pour out from my Spirit.*'" This rendition we have heard from some of their ministers, so that it seems to be thought by them to be a way out of the difficulty.

This rendering is founded upon the supposed meaning of the preposition ἀπὸ in Acts ii, 17: ἐχέω ἀπὸ τοῦ Πνεύματος μου. This is made use of in this way: It is not the Holy Spirit that is poured out, but his truth or revelation that comes *from* him. Hence what is poured out is the word. But it is difficult to see how this helps the case; for if it is the word of inspiration which is here "poured out" in this baptism, then it follows that not only Christians are baptized by the Holy Ghost, but impenitent sinners also, for they receive this word, which comes from the Holy Ghost. But admitting, for the sake of the argument, that this rendering is proper, does it not follow that what is "poured out" is a spiritual influence coming after the word has been received and accepted? It came upon the household of Cornelius after they received the word. No evangelical Christian whatever holds to a conception so gross as this, that the entire Third Person in the Trinity was "poured out" upon

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\* "On the Rock," p. 222.



the disciples or any one else ; but what they do maintain is, that in the baptism of the Holy Ghost there is an immediate impartation of the Holy Ghost, in his baptizing or purifying influence, to the soul of the believer.

Wonderful discovery this—the baptism of words! Why, our Heavenly Father had been doing this from the time of the first revelation to men. Strange that at the time the revelation was about completed the fragment that remained should be called a baptism.

But in Titus iii, 5, 6, we have the Holy Ghost “poured out abundantly.” The preposition *ἀπὸ* is not in this text. The relative *οὗ*, “which,” must either agree with *λουτροῦ*, “washing,” or with *Πνεύματος ἁγίου*, Holy Ghost; for they are both in the neuter gender, while “renewing” is in the feminine gender. To construe the relative “which” in the text with “washing,” will scarcely be admitted by these theorists. If, then, construed with the “Holy Ghost,” the text declares that it was poured out on the believer abundantly. Now, they tell us, in interpreting this text, that “the renewing of the Holy Ghost” is the influence of the word upon the minds and consciences of men. If so, how does it come that this relative is not in the feminine gender, to agree with *renewing*? It seems to the writer that the very grammatical structure is made to teach that it is not mediate agency that comes in contact with the soul, but the Spirit himself, and the result is a washing and renewing.

With this interpretation fully agree other declarations of the apostle Paul concerning spiritual baptism. As for example, Eph. iv, 5: "One Lord, one faith, one baptism;" Rom. vi, 3, 4: "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized in Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life;" and Col. ii, 11, 12: "In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead." Now, it is a very reasonable rule of interpretation to hold that the forms of expression peculiar to a writer have the same interpretation in all places, that he has given to them in one or a few instances. The characteristic expressions here are "one body," "one baptism," and "baptism into Christ." The one body is Christ, or rather Christ's spiritual Church. The "one baptism" is by the Spirit, and "baptism into Christ" is spiritual baptism. Water baptism never baptizes any one "into Christ," but only into the name of Christ; that is into a profession of the name of Christ. Therefore, these facts exclude water baptism from all these texts, only as it is implied in the antitype, the baptism of the Spirit.

How do we make this out? Paul defines the "one

body" and the "one baptism," in 1 Cor. xii, 13: "For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body." Apply, then, this definition of the "one baptism" to the three texts before given, and you make spiritual baptism out of all of them. Baptism does precisely the same thing in Rom. vi, 3 and 4, and Col. ii, 11, 12, that baptism by the Spirit is said to do in 1 Cor. xii, 13; that is, it baptizes us into "one body" "into Christ." Hence if water baptism does the same thing, it follows that there are two baptisms effecting the same result; but there is but "one baptism," and that baptism is by "one Spirit." The persistent tendency of man to ritualism in religion is seen in the determination to read *water* into texts wherever baptism is mentioned, unless it is specifically excluded.

The forms of expression used in Rom. vi, 3-6, and Col. ii, 11, 12, do not agree with the idea of a reference to water baptism. The controlling thought here is a death to sin, and a life to righteousness. It is a baptism *into Christ, into his death, into death*. Now, we know that water baptism is "into the name of Christ" (Acts xix, 5), and we know, as shown above, that the baptizing of the Spirit is "into Christ." Baptism "*into his death*" is into the saving power of his death, and *into death* is into a death to sin and a life to righteousness. How preposterous to attribute such overwhelming results to mere ritual baptism! If, as the followers of Campbell claim, water baptism produces death to sin in the penitent believer,

what produces death to sin in the penitent backslider? For he must be buried by baptism into death also, if he would live again unto righteousness. But note that this baptism is not, as immersionists claim, in the "likeness" of a burial, but "in the likeness of his death;" so "our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed." "The likeness of his death" is crucifixion. There is still another likeness indicated in verse 3: "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." Now, the true interpretation of this depends upon the agency by which Christ was raised from the dead. In chapter viii, 11, we are told that Christ was raised by the Spirit: "But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Jesus from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you." So also 1 Peter iii, 18: "Being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit." There is, then, a likeness as to agency between our spiritual resurrection, and the resurrection of Christ from the dead. The likeness of his death is crucifixion; the likeness of resurrection is spiritual power.

A consideration of the parallel passage—Col. ii, 11, 12—will reveal principles in harmony with the interpretation just given. Here we are told that this baptism is a circumcision—"the circumcision of Christ"—"made without hands." This circumcision

is most certainly a spiritual circumcision; for it is not physical in its mode—it is made without hands. Then the burial with Christ and the resurrection are spoken of. The resurrection is through the faith of the operation or energy (*ἐνεργείας*) of God, and here his resurrection from the dead is again grounded on the operation of the Holy Spirit; and not only so, but the quickening power of the Spirit is spoken of in the next verse as the immediate effect of this baptism: “And you, being dead in your sins, and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him.” That is, the same power that raised him quickened you in baptism. There can be no question, therefore, that the resurrection is a spiritual resurrection; and if so, the burial must be spiritual. The burial can not be physical, and the resurrection spiritual; they must be similar in this respect. But again, we call attention to the fact that the point of comparison is not a likeness of burial and resurrection to which a physical immersion and emersion is made to have some remote resemblance, but a likeness of death and resurrection. In Col. ii, 11, 12, the “putting off the body the sins of the flesh,” that is death; and “risen through the faith of the operation of God,” quickened together with him. In Rom. vi, 5: “In the likeness of his death,” “our old man crucified with him that the body of sin might be destroyed,” and “like as Christ was raised from the dead, even so also we should walk in newness of life.”

The followers of A. Campbell contend that the baptism of the Holy Ghost was a miracle-working gift. This is an assumption wholly gratuitous. It is for this reason, however, that they seek to confine it to the apostles and to the household of Cornelius. They point to the fact that, in both these instances of Holy Ghost baptism, there was a speaking with tongues. But in 1 Cor. xii, the various gifts of the Spirit are set forth, and these are all summed up in verse 13, as the result of the baptism of the Holy Ghost which came upon all. The assertion that the baptism of the Holy Ghost is only a miracle-working ministration, is tantamount to the denial that there is any gift of the Spirit with the Church to-day; for it was in this form that it was promised to the entire Church. "The Holy Spirit of promise," "the Comforter," "the gift of the Spirit," each and all came in a baptism on Pentecost. Hence, to deny the baptism of the Spirit to the Church to-day, is to deny each and all of these, and is to leave the Church comfortless.



## CHAPTER XIX.

## THE IMMEDIATE OPERATION OF THE SPIRIT CONTINUED—SYNONYMS OF BAPTISM.

THE words *wash, cleanse, purify, sanctify, seal,* and *anoint*, as used in the Scriptures as synonyms for the baptism of the Spirit, imply direct and immediate impression upon the hearts and consciences of believers. In but a very few instances are any of these ascribed, even in a secondary and remote sense, to the word. But we will examine these supposed instances, lest it be thought that there is more in them in favor of this theory than really is. John xv, 3, is often quoted as setting forth the cleansing power of the word: "Now ye are clean, through the word which I have spoken unto you." It depends entirely upon what is meant by "the word which I have spoken unto you." It is maintained that it refers to the general teaching of Christ going before. If such were the case, it would be the plural *words*, instead of word. This "*word*," speaking them clean, will be found in ch. xiii, 10: "Jesus saith to him, He that is washed needeth not save to wash his feet, but is clean every whit; and ye are clean, but not all." It is manifest that the Savior here simply speaks them clean by an exercise of that power he had to speak sins

forgiven. So by the Holy Ghost he speaks to human hearts, "Be thou clean."

John xvii, 17, is also cited as a proof of sanctification by means of the truth. It was extensively quoted by Campbell in his debate with Professor Rice, and Braden in his debate with Dr. Hughey. "Sanctify them through the truth; thy word is truth." Now it must be admitted that the word *sanctify* in this case means the same, as applied to the disciples, that it does as applied to Christ; for the Savior says, verse 19: "And for their sakes I sanctify myself, that they also might be sanctified through the truth." The word *sanctify* therefore means *consecrate*, or *set apart*. It can not mean *to cleanse from sin*, for they were already "clean," ch. xiii, 10, and xv, 3. And besides, the Savior did not mean, "even so cleanse *I myself*," for he had no sin to be cleansed from. The Revised Version gives the key to the whole matter in reading the text, "Sanctify them in the truth;" that is, in the use of the truth for their office as teachers; and verse 19 may be paraphrased thus: "And for their sakes I set myself apart as their teacher, that they might also be set apart as teachers of the truth." This is the plain and obvious meaning of the prayer. One thing, however, is excluded; it can not be a prayer for the salvation of the apostles, and hence is misemployed when used in this sense.

Another passage used by them in the same way is

Rom. i, 16: "I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth." In the first place, the passage does not affirm that the gospel is the only power of God unto salvation, and it would be sufficient for all purposes of argument to dismiss it with this remark. In the second place, what is the meaning of the term gospel here? These parties seem to take it for granted that it means the whole New Testament canon. The gospel is the glad tidings of salvation through Christ and his gifts unto men. Hence the "gospel was preached unto Abraham,"\* and preached to the children of Israel in the wilderness.† It therefore is this simple truth that "God is in Christ reconciling the world unto himself," and has no water baptism in it whatever.

For a similar purpose, Eph. v, 25, 26, is cited: "Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word." In reply to the argument attempted from this, it is only necessary to call attention to the fact that those who contend for the *immediate* influence of the Spirit do not deny his *mediate* work. But the words ἐν ῥήματι may, with equal propriety, be translated "in the word"—that is, according to the word. What word? The word of the prophet Ezekiel, ch.

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\* Gal. iii, 8. † Heb. iv, 2.

xxxvi, 25-27: "Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you and ye shall be clean, and from all your filthiness and idols will I cleanse you. A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you. I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh. And I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments to do them." Now, all other passages, where the word of truth is spoken of in connection with cleansing, washing, and the like, can be explained in the same way. No supposed difficulty for the doctrine of evangelical Christians has been evaded. In fact, all their arguments proceed upon the assumptions, already referred to, that the instrumentality of the word is denied. It is not. Simply the additional fact of the direct impression and immediate efficacy of the Holy Spirit is asserted, and this latter the followers of A. Campbell deny.

The psalmist David prays, after his great sin (Psa. li, 7): "Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow." And again, in verse 10: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." Now, was the psalmist praying for the word—for the law of God—to be given him to "purge and wash him," "to create in him a clean heart and renew a right spirit within him?" In his debate with Professor Rice, Mr. Campbell was wont to quote from Psa. xix: "The law

of God is perfect, converting the soul." David already had this converting law; what more was he praying for? This law had done its work, "for by it was the knowledge of sin." It accused him and condemned him, and he now felt he needed a direct communication from the great Author of the law, saying to his heart: "Thy sins are forgiven thee"—"thou art clean."

Mr. Campbell and his followers teach that the naturalized citizen of the kingdom of Christ has a right to petition or pray. Now, in the case of a backslider, like David, a petition for pardon and cleansing is offered,—how is it obtained? Does God pardon? How does the sinner know it? Does he cleanse? By what agency does he do it? If it is all done by the word, it is a decided waste of time, even a presumption, to pray for that he already has in the Book of Truth.

The cleansing spoken of in Ezekiel xxxvi, 25–27, manifests the same unmistakable marks of divine, immediate interposition. The promise to "sprinkle clean water" upon Israel for the purpose of cleansing, can scarcely be taken in a physical sense. And it is certain that "clean water," as a symbol, does not stand for the word. The "new heart" and "new spirit" promised require an exercise of divine power, and the promise of the gift of his Spirit is to "cause" them "to walk in his statutes and keep his judgments." No words could better set forth the wide difference

between God's operation upon the hearts of men and the office of the law of God. The law is in their minds already. His Spirit *causes* them to walk in it.

The same great truth is taught in Acts xv, 8, 9: "And God, which knoweth the hearts, bare them witness, giving them the Holy Ghost, even as unto us; and put no difference between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith." Let it be noted that this refers to the baptism of the household of Cornelius by the Holy Ghost, and that God thus gave them the Holy Ghost to "bear them witness," and to purify their hearts, upon their faith in Christ. And in 1 Cor. vi, 11, we have, in formulated statement, the presentation of the agency by which this washing, cleansing, and sanctification are brought about: "And such were some of you, but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified, in the name of the Lord Jesus, and *by the Spirit of our God.*" So, also, sanctification of the Spirit is spoken of as distinct from the office of the truth, in 2 Thess. ii, 13: "But we are bound to give thanks always to God for you, brethren, beloved of the Lord, because God hath, from the beginning, chosen you to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth."

With an equally forceful import are those passages of divine truth which attribute *sealing* and *anointing* to the Holy Ghost—2 Cor. i, 21, 22: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ and hath anointed us, is God; who hath also sealed us and given



the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts." Eph. i, 13: "In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of the truth of the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, after that ye believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, which is the earnest of our inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory." Eph. iv, 30: "And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye were sealed unto the day of redemption." 1 John ii, 20 and 27: "But ye have an *unction* from the Holy One, and ye know all things. . . . But the anointing which ye have received from him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same *anointing* teacheth you all things, and is truth and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him."

Now there are several points to be noted with reference to these passages: 1. Sealing is by direct impress on wax, or the substance sealed. 2. As a seal it is a perpetual attestation of the instrument sealed. 3. Anointing is the direct application of the anointing oil to the person anointed. 4. The seal of the Holy Ghost, in the first two passages, is called an "earnest"—a pledge—to their acceptance with God. 5. This anointing, sealing, and earnest came after the truth; that is, the office of the truth is clearly defined, and having received the truth, they afterward were sealed and anointed of God by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit, in his office of a witness, a com-

forter, a helper, abides with the Church of Christ through all ages to the end of time. These blessed influences are set forth in a quite extensive variety of statement in the Scriptures, statement totally inexplicable if the immediate impact of the Spirit is denied. In the eighth chapter of Romans the apostle Paul very fully presents the office and work of the Holy Ghost in the Christian Church, emphatically setting forth the *indwelling* of the Spirit in the hearts of all who are truly children of God, saying, in verses 14-16: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God. For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; but ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit that we are the children of God." It would seem that this needs no comment, that language could not more explicitly teach a direct impression of the Spirit. Yet such is the blinding influence of preconceived theories, that in their interest these plain utterances of inspiration are explained away. We are told that the Spirit bears witness by the word. Then "the Spirit itself" is the word. If so, by what combination of words in language will we be able to designate the Holy Ghost apart from the word? The "earnest of the Spirit," spoken of in 2 Cor. i, 22, and v, 5; Eph. i, 13, 14, and iv, 30, is of like import.

This doctrine of the direct witness of the Spirit is in consonance with the soundest dictates of reason.

Sin is a fact of personal experience, and felt in the condemnation of conscience. The knowledge of sin comes from a personal consciousness of its existence. Without this, no amount of reasoning could convince of sin. Repentance is a godly sorrow for sin, a deep, pungent feeling of the justice of divine displeasure at it. Now, what can be the witness of the removal of guilt and condemnation, and a sense of restoration to divine favor, but an impression made in consciousness? The same divine voice that speaks in conscience, and says, *Thou art guilty, thou art condemned*, must say, *Thou art pardoned, thou art clear*. The first is the voice of God in man, the second must likewise be his voice; "for who can forgive sins but God alone?"

But it may be said, Conscience simply condemns or approves according to the knowledge of the right, and violation of it or conformity to it; that the individual who does what he believes to be right, whether it be right or not, will have the approval of conscience. This is readily conceded, and, as a fact, lies directly against the theory that makes the only witness of pardon to consist in a subjective process of reasoning, which amounts to this alone: I have done what I believe to be right in believing, repenting, confessing Christ, and being baptized; I may therefore conclude I am pardoned. But suppose this is a mistake; what then? I have the approval of conscience to an error in judgment, and yet have no evidence of acceptance

with God. The very fact that human reason is liable to err, is a reason why God should say to the truly believing penitent heart, "Thy sins are forgiven thee," and not leave him to the uncertainty arising from consciousness of human fallibility.

But the Holy Spirit, as an abiding companion, comforter, helper, and teacher, is taught in numerous passages in the Scriptures. John vii, 38, 39: "He that believeth on me, as the Scripture hath said, out of his belly ['from within him,' marginal reading of the Revised Version] shall flow rivers of living water. But this he spake of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified." Of similar import are the promises of the *Paraclete*, in John xiv, 16, 17, and 26; xv, 26; and xvi, 7-13, on which extensive comment has already been made. Rom. viii, 26: "Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities, for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which can not be uttered." 2 Cor. iii, 3: "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ, ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the Spirit of the living God; not in tables of stone, but in fleshly tables of the heart." 1 Cor. iii, 16: "Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and that the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?" Also vi, 19: "What! know ye not that your body is the temple of the

Holy Ghost, which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" Rom. v, 5: "And hope maketh not ashamed, because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, which is given unto us."

These are some of the passages selected out of many of a similar import, to be found in the Scriptures, setting forth the positive presence of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of Christians as a helper, comforter, teacher. No amount of exegetical manipulation can break their force in this direction.

There are other passages that speak of "access by the Spirit," Eph. ii, 18; "Habitation of God through the Spirit," Eph. ii, 22; "Strengthened with might by the Spirit in the inner man," Eph. iii, 16; "Grieving the Spirit," Eph. iv. 30; "Filled with the Spirit," Eph. v, 18; "Supply of the Spirit," Phil. i, 19; "Fellowship of the Spirit," Phil. ii, 1; "Quench not the Spirit," 1 Thess. v, 19; "Made partakers of the Holy Ghost," Heb. vi, 4; "Despite to the Spirit of grace," Heb. x, 26; "Praying in the Holy Ghost," Jude 20. There is the actual embarrassment of riches on this great and blessed truth in the Scriptures. It is with difficulty that the writer is able to select, out of the many passages teaching, as shown above by a great diversity of expression, this truth, to set forth the fact of the immediate presence of the Holy Spirit with the child of God.

A few have been selected from the smaller epis-



bles to give the reader an idea of how ample the proof of this doctrine in the Book of divine inspiration. In fact, the gift of the Holy Ghost is the one great gift through which all other good is to come to us. In Luke xi, 13, the Master says: "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him!" Here the Holy Spirit is given in answer to prayer. Can this mean the word of truth? If not, what does it mean? Why the Holy Spirit first? Because that implies the gift of pardon, regeneration, adoption, comfort, help,—all the blessings that belong to the children of God.

In closing up the discussion upon this theme, we note some objections that are fatal to the doctrine that the Spirit only operates through the word, as Mr. Campbell says:\* "As all the influence which my spirit has exerted upon other spirits, at home or abroad, has been the stipulated signs of ideas, of spiritual operations by my written or spoken word; so believe I that all the influence of God's good Spirit, now felt in the way of *conviction* or *consolation*, in the four quarters of the globe, is by the Word written, read, and heard, which is called the living oracles." The italics are my own, to call the reader's attention to how comprehensive the statement. It could be

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\* "Millennial Harbinger," Vol. VI, p. 356.



duplicated from a number of their most able doctrinal exponents.

If this is true doctrine, it follows that prayer for spiritual blessings is useless. If God does not impress himself upon human hearts aside from the word of truth, and in addition to it, then the only comfort the Christian can get is by meditation on this word and a subjective feeling of satisfaction or peace wrought within himself by his cogitations. And a prayer for the conversion of sinners would be a sinful waste of time, inasmuch as it would be mere idle asking of God to do what he has commanded the Christian to do by the use of the word, and which can only be done by bringing its truths home to human judgments, or getting those who know the truth to reflect on it.

Again, from the stand-point of this doctrine there is no knowledge of forgiveness of sins; there may be belief of forgiveness, but this is founded on fallible reasoning, predicated on uncertain premises. For the advocates of this doctrine will scarcely assert in the face of nine-tenths of the Christian world who think differently, that they *know* they are right as to the conditions of pardon; nor can they claim that they are infallibly certain they have completely fulfilled all the conditions. No deductions can be more certain than the premises upon which they are founded. Then, if there is uncertainty in the premises, and uncertainty in their process of fulfillment, there is a cumulative uncertainty in the conclusion. No consistent follower

of A. Campbell can say, I know that Jesus hath power on earth to forgive sins. He may say, "I think so, I believe so." Nor can he say, "Abba Father," for the Spirit himself does not bear witness with him. He can say, My fallible interpretation of the Word leads me to believe that I have obeyed the gospel, and because I have done so, I may believe I am accepted of him.

But then, as shown before, if he become a backslider, and repents, he is absolutely without evidence of his reinstatement to divine favor, if there is no witnessing spirit; for he can not go back to his baptism, which he claimed was for the remission of his past sins, for the sins he now seeks remission for are subsequent sins. He may pray; but praying will bring no sense of reconciliation, save and except such as he may predicate simply on the fact that he prayed more or less earnestly.

It is truly a doctrine beset with difficulties many and profound, and were it not for the theory of baptismal remission or justification, which anchors the scheme to these fatal rocks, it is to be believed that the maturer thought of broader scholarship would ultimately drift these people over into the wide ocean of an all-pervading, gracious spiritual influence, and put them into fraternal harmony with the great bodies of Protestantism in one fellowship of the Spirit.

## CHAPTER XX.

### SUNDRY OBJECTIONS OF CAMPBELLITE TEACHERS TO METHODIST DOCTRINES.

It is customary with the exponents of this system of faith to formulate a general proposition against both the polity and doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and call upon our ministry to defend them in discussion. The writer, on two occasions, has been required to respond to the following proposition; namely, "The Methodist Episcopal Church teaches doctrines, and enjoins usages that are contrary to the Word of God." This gives them opportunity to make a general attack on the doctrines and economy of the Methodist Episcopal Church, and at the same time present the supposed simplicity and scripturalness of the creed devised and promulgated by Alexander Campbell.

When it is remembered by the reader that this so-called reformation started out with the laudable purpose of bringing about Christian unity among the various denominations of Christians, and then the fact is taken into consideration that it is a very denominational Ishmael among the Churches, waging a perpetual war of denunciation and proselytism against

them, it is a sad comment upon the inability of our humanity, ordinarily, to take the proper gauge of its own motives, impulses, and principles.

It is doubtful if there is to be found among the denominations of Protestantism one more imperious in its claims, narrower in its creed, and more uncharitable toward the honest principles of others, than this one that claims to offer to the Christian world a basis upon which all can unite.

But we will deal more fully with this subject when we come to treat of the distinctive creed and polity of Campbellism. At present attention will be given to their assault on Methodism—an assault that is made wherever their ministers seek to make converts to their faith. It is always with them a matter of great rejoicing when they succeed in winning a convert from some one of “the sects,” as they are wont to style the other Christian bodies. The first point of attack is usually the denominational name—Methodist Episcopal Church. The assumption is, that to take any other name than that of *Christian Church*, is to violate a divine injunction, and build up a division and schism in the body of Christ. It is usually maintained by them that Christian Church is a name of divine appointment and sanction. In support of these assumptions, the following Scriptures are uniformly cited: Isa. lxii, 2: “Thou shalt be called by a new name, which the mouth of the Lord shall name.” Then, Acts xi, 26: “The disciples were called Chris-

tians first at Antioch." Acts xxvi, 28: "Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian." 1 Peter iv, 16: "Yet if any man suffer as a Christian, let him be not ashamed." James ii, 7: "Do not they blaspheme that worthy name by the which ye are called?" Eph. iii, 14: "Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named." Rev. ii, 13: "I know thy works, and that thou holdest fast my name." It is held also that the taking of distinctive denominational names is condemned in 1 Cor. i, where the apostle Paul censures his brethren of the Corinthian Church for saying, "I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ." These quotations make up the entire body of Scriptural proof that is offered on this point.

In the determination of a question in dispute, it always helps to get a clear idea of the point at issue, and what is claimed by the disputants. Let it be understood here that it is not a question as to what the individual followers of Christ should be called, for all agree that they should be called Christians; not perhaps as a name specifically enjoined by divine inspiration, but as an appropriate descriptive appellation. Hence Baptists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Methodists, and all other denominations call themselves Christians, and it is only when they wish to discriminate between their several beliefs that they use the term Baptist, Methodist, and the like. Every citizen within the United States may be called a citi-

zen of the same. And yet there are times when his State citizenship is required properly to designate him. It is not dishonoring the name of American citizen to say that he is a Pennsylvanian, a Virginian, an Ohioan. So a Baptist or a Methodist, in avowing his distinctive denominational relationship, does not disavow his relationship to Christ or the name Christian. Those who take the name Christian as their distinctive denominational name, and refuse to be discriminated by their peculiar characteristics or otherwise, display an arrogance toward other Christians that should not be tolerated. It is this exclusiveness that makes division and schism. The Methodist can style the Presbyterian or Baptist or Congregationalist his Christian brother; but the followers of Alexander Campbell can not consistently do so. Therefore, the idea that Christians who are of Methodist belief, and Christians who are of Baptist belief, in taking these denominational appellations properly to distinguish themselves, ignore the name of Christ, is a total misapprehension of the real facts in the case.

For an individual to have said, "I am of the Church of Ephesus, or of the Church of Smyrna, or of the Church of Pergamos," would not have been to deny the name of Christ or Christian; for these local appellations were necessary as designations, but no more so than is Baptist, Lutheran, Presbyterian, Methodist, to-day.

But the question is not, What shall the individual



followers of Christ call themselves?—for they all call themselves Christians—but, What shall the Church in its *organic capacity* call itself? The followers of Campbell say *Christian Church*, and no other denominational designation, for this is a divinely ordained name. In the first place, this may be met with a square contradiction. The name *Christian Church* has no existence in the Scriptures. The individual followers of Christ were called Christians, probably at first as a nickname; but certainly not objectionable to one who had espoused the cause of Christ; but the Church, as an organization, was not called the *Christian Church*; and for any denomination of professing Christians to make use of this false assumption to arrogate to themselves the exclusive name of *Christian Church*, and therefore demand to be called the *Christian Church*, is something that proper self-respect in other Christians requires that they should promptly resent.

The Church as a divine institution in its universality—that is, the body of those whose “names are written in heaven”—has a divine name uniformly given to it in the Scriptures, and that is “*the Church of God.*” The term *Church of Christ* does not even once occur in the Scriptures—“*Churches of Christ*” in one instance Rom. xvi, 16. There is a significance in this fact. The Church existed before the Son of God became the Christ, and therefore its generic name, which belonged to it in all the past ages, was per-

petuated with it, in order that its unity might be maintained.

But it may be asked, Is not Christian Church an appropriate appellation? Most certainly, as an appellation designating the Church in its catholicity under the Christian dispensation, it is appropriate. Still it is not a divinely appointed name; and when this assertion is made, as it often is by these teachers, there is not one particle of Scripture warrant for it. Yet it is uncharitable and arrogant for any denomination distinctively to style itself the Christian Church, as though other denominations were not Christian in their faith and doctrines.

Having thus cleared away the false assumptions underlying their arguments, it will be seen that the passages of Scripture they are wont to cite are in no sense relevant, and need but little further elucidation. Isa. lxii, 2, does not refer either to the name Christian or Christian Church, and only such as have a preconceived theory to maintain would attempt to broach such an opinion. In verse 4 of this chapter, we have both the old name and the new name given in the prophetic symbolism: "Thou shalt no more be termed Forsaken; neither shall thy land any more be termed Desolate; but thou shalt be called Hephzibah, and thy land Beulah: for the Lord delighteth in thee, and thy land shall be married." Eph. ii, 14, 15: "For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in

heaven and earth is named." It will suffice to ask, Does this refer to the name Christian Church? Is there here even a remote allusion to this name as an appellation of the Church? If it were conceded that reference here is had to the term Christian as a personal designation of the individual followers of Christ, that would in no sense prove that the Church of God should be called by no other name than Christian Church, and certainly would give no warrant for the assumption of the name *the Christian Church* by any one small fraction of the body of Christ. The fact is, the expression "of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named," refers to the Father. Many excellent ancient MSS. and versions omit the words "of our Lord Jesus Christ" in verse 14. But the terms Father and family have a mutual relation to each other; they are correlative terms, and should be so construed in the interpretation of the text. Saints in heaven and saints on earth might properly be called Christians; but would Christian be a proper designation of the angels of God? The term Christ is an official appellation, and belongs to him as *our* anointed prophet, priest, and king. The name referred to in the text is "sons of God." 1 John iii, 1: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God." So also Gal. iv, 6, 7: "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. Where-

fore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

Thus we think the Methodist Episcopal Church, in having the modesty, and also the Christian charity, to take a distinctive denominational appellation among the organizations that compose the Church of God, in so doing neither yields up their right to be called Christians, nor violates any mandate of the Scriptures; while, on the contrary, those who arrogate to themselves that name alone, put themselves in a place where other Christians are compelled to give them a distinctive appellation which may not be acceptable to them. It is certainly in the worst kind of taste for the followers of A. Campbell, or any other denomination, to style themselves *the Christian Church*. The writer, out of respect for his own personal rights, and out of courtesy to other Christian denominations, begs to be excused.

Following this, there are several objections that they usually make to our book of Discipline and Articles of Religion, to which we will reply when the subject of Discipline and Creeds is considered—the objections not being made to the doctrines as false, but only to the form of their promulgation, they claiming that they are not enjoined in the Scriptures as matters of faith.

But Article VIII of our Articles of Religion is often by them held up as teaching a doctrine con-

trary to the teaching of the Scriptures. The article reads: "The condition of man, after the fall of Adam is such that he can not turn and prepare himself, by his own natural strength and works, to faith, and calling upon God; wherefore we have no power to do good works, pleasant and acceptable to God, without the grace of God by Christ preventing us, that we may have a good will."

The reason for their stout objection to this article is the fact that it teaches the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit and grace upon human hearts, and, as shown in former chapters, that they can not admit, without upsetting the very foundation-stones of Campbellism, baptism as a condition to justification, and its witness to the fact of justification; for if the Divine Spirit helps the sinner, why may he not witness to the believer? But in this respect the followers of A. Campbell are more consistent, but less orthodox, than was their great teacher. He taught inherent depravity and human sinful helplessness. After speaking of Adam's transgression and its effects upon his race, he says:\* "There is therefore a sin of our nature, as well as personal transgression. Some inappositely call the sin of our nature our 'original sin,' as if the sin of Adam was the personal offense of all his children. True, indeed, it is; our nature was corrupted by the fall of Adam before it was transmitted

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\* "Christian System," p. 28.



to us, and hence that hereditary imbecility to do good, and that proneness to do evil, so universally apparent in all human beings. Let no man open his mouth against the transmission of moral distemper until he satisfactorily explain the fact that the special characteristic vices of parents appear in their children, as much as the color of their skin, their hair, or the contour of their faces. A disease in the moral constitution of man is as clearly transmissible as any physical taint, if there be any truth in history, biography, or human observation."

Here is language clearly asserting inherited depravity,—“hereditary imbecility to do good, and proneness to do evil.” Now, if such be the condition of the human heart, no mere appeal to the intellect will meet the demands of the case; “hereditary imbecility” can only be overcome by the immediate influence of the Divine Spirit. With this agrees the teaching of the Scriptures in the use of such terms as express the utter helplessness of a race of sinners without immediate divine assistance,—such as “dead in trespasses and in sins;” \* “the whole head sick,” “the whole heart faint;” † “enchained to the putrefying body of sin.” ‡

In inveighing against the doctrine of this Article of Religion, it is customary for these teachers to hold it up as teaching total depravity. The words *total depravity*

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\* Eph. ii, 1. † Isa. i, 5. ‡ Rom. vii, 24.



have no existence in any Article of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church; and while in orthodox theology they have a very definite import, yet there is nothing in our Articles of Religion requiring our use of them, or a defense of them as a proper theological technic. The term, however, as defined by those that use it, simply means "hereditary imbecility to do good," a total bent and inclination to sin, so that the sinner, left to himself, would never turn to seek after righteousness. But man has not been left to himself; but provisions, gracious and ample, have been made for the salvation of the entire race, and the only question of difference between the followers of A. Campbell and Methodists is this: What constitutes these provisions? They say they are the atonement and the word alone. Methodists say, in addition to these is a manifestation of the Spirit, given to every man to profit withal.\* They say because of man's "hereditary imbecility to good, and proneness to evil," he needs the help of God. Mr. Braden † says: "This teaches the doctrine of election and reprobation." Let us see. Mr. Braden believes that the word of divine truth is the divine gracious provision for the salvation of men. If this alone, then only those who have it are elected to the gracious possibility of salvation. In other words, God has passed by to this date the greater part of the human race, making no provision what-

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\* 1 Cor. xii, 7. † "Hughey and Braden Debate," p. 522.

ever for them ; and if any of the heathen are saved, they are saved through a morality that is wholly their own. The Methodist Church believes that God has made it possible for every child of man to be saved who will use the grace given, while Campbellism must either deny this, or else save some outside of any manifestation of grace whatever. The simple truth is, the article asserts man's natural inability to a righteousness that will meet the divine requirements, and also indicates that a gracious ability is given unto him, that his salvation may be of "grace, and not of works;" of God, and not of man. Man's work is simply the employment of the grace supplied.

That part of Article II of the Articles of Religion which says Christ "was crucified, dead, and buried, to reconcile his Father to us," is also very vehemently assailed by them. The animus of this antagonism is found in the fact that it is thought that the doctrine of a divine side to the work of reconciliation leaves open a way of prayer to the sinner, and a witnessing spirit to the believer. Much of their opposition is either founded upon a misapprehension of the import of the language here used, or is a mere contention about words. The article only asserts that Christ suffered and died to reconcile the administration of divine justice to the pardon of our sin ; that is, to reconcile divine justice with divine mercy. Surely it will not be contended that Christ did not die to "make it possible for God to be just, and the

justifier of sinners.”\* If it is contended that this propitiation of divine justice is in no sense a reconciliation of God to the sinner, then this is a question to be decided by an appeal to the Word of God. Though it is with some difficulty we get at the exact meaning of these persons, yet their methods of reasoning lead to the conclusion that they mean to deny *in toto* the application of the term reconciliation in the plan of redemption to God; that is, God was in no sense reconciled to man. He never was unreconciled. What does the word *reconcile* mean? Webster defines it “to bring together, to unite.” There are two parties in every reconciliation, and they are only reconciled when they are brought into harmony. Can God be in a state of reconciliation with man in sin and willful disobedience? Can it be said that God is well pleased with him? If not, then he needs to be reconciled to him by man’s repentance and faith. The Scriptures teach that the wrath of God abides on the unbeliever. John iii, 36: “He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.” Can God be said to be reconciled to that individual upon whom his *wrath abides*? But this shall be treated of more fully when we consider the individual sinner’s reconciliation to God.

The reconciliation in the article especially spoken of,

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\* Rom. iii, 26.

is the reconciliation of the Father to man's justification in the sacrificial death of Christ. The fundamental idea contained in the word *sacrifice* is the placating of divine justice, and this placating is called in the Scriptures "making reconciliation for iniquity." Daniel ix, 24: "Seventy weeks are determined upon thy holy city to finish the transgression, and to *make reconciliation for iniquity.*" This, without question, refers to the sacrificial work of Christ, and that most certainly was made to divine justice. What, then, was reconciled on Calvary? Divine justice. The Hebrew word for reconcile is *kaphar*—to cover, to make atonement. It would be marvelously absurd to maintain that man is the party that is to be reconciled here.

The word *reconcile* and its derivatives occur in the New Testament twelve times, where it signifies the restoration of man again to favor with God. These are translations of four different Greek words, *καταλλάσσω*, *ἀποκαταλλάττω*, *καταλλαγῇ*, *ἰλάσχομαι*. The first three indicate or signify the change of relations brought about between God and the sinner. Our reconciliation is not spoken of until it is a reconciliation in fact, by bringing the alienated parties together. The first employment of the term reconcile (*καταλλάσσω*) in reference to the relation in grace between God and man, is in Rom. v, 10: "For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son; much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life." Now, what was rec-

onciled by the death of Christ? Most certainly divine justice; not man, for this reconciliation took place when "we were enemies." Reconciliation is the divine side of the work of Christ, salvation is our side; that is, he reconciles God and saves us. In 2 Cor. v, 18, 19: "And all things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ, and hath given us the ministry of reconciliation; to wit, that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them, and hath committed unto us the word of reconciliation." Note that this reconciliation "hath" been completed through Jesus Christ. It therefore can not be the reconciliation of the sinner to God. Verse 19 defines this reconciliation; to wit, "that God was in Christ reconciling the world unto himself." When was this done? In the incarnation. Notice the past tense "was." If the reconciliation were that of man, then it would be in the present tense. The past tense refers to the atoning sacrifice of Christ. The reconciliation was in the past; the "ministry" of divine "reconciliation" is future. Of like import are Eph. ii, 16: "And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby;" and Col. i, 20, 21: "And, having made peace through the blood of the cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven. And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in



your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death."

Now, in both of these quotations the reconciliation is by the cross, and is in the past tense. In Eph. ii, 16, it is in the aorist subjunctive, and in Col. i, 20 in the aorist infinitive. This fact most conclusively demonstrates that it does not refer to the future reconciliation of the sinner. Winer, in his "New Testament Grammar," says that it "is only in appearance that the aorist is used for the future." If, then, the reconciliation took place in past time, through Christ's death and by the cross, it was not the sinner that was reconciled, for he is yet to be reconciled. It must therefore be God who has been reconciled to the justification of the sinner.

In Heb. ii, 17, we have it distinctly stated that Christ came to reconcile the Father. "Wherefore in all things it behooved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful high priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." It will be observed that the word *pertaining* has been supplied by the translators, and is not in the text. It should read "a merciful and faithful high priest in things to God, to make reconciliation." The only way that they attempt to meet this text is by saying that reconciliation is not the proper translation of the verb *ἱλάσσομαι*, that it should be propitiation. But what is propitia-



tion but a stronger term for the same fact—the reconciliation of divine justice to the pardon of man’s sin?

It in no wise meets the issues of the case to cite, as Mr. Braden does, and as other exponents of Campbellism do, the parable of the Prodigal Son, and such passages as John iii, 16: “God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him might not perish, but have everlasting life.” For the question still remains, What was Christ given for? What was propitiated by his death? When these questions are answered, there will be the recognition of the fact that, before man could be saved, divine justice must be reconciled.

But the inspiration of their strenuous objection to this Article of Religion is the belief that it teaches that God must be reconciled to each individual sinner through his (the sinner’s) fulfillment of the conditions to salvation, and that the seeking of such reconciliation opens the way for penitential, importunate prayer—a seeking of God with the whole heart. It is at this point of opposition that Methodist mourners’ benches, anxious seats, inquiry meetings, seeking salvation, calling on the Lord for salvation, and the like, are assaulted and execrated as a manifestation of folly—a course unwarranted by the Scriptures. Now, in numerous passages of Scripture we are taught that God is angry with the sinner. (Eph. ii, 3, and v, 6; Col. iii, 6.) If angry, certainly not reconciled.

Now, whatever will remove his righteous wrath, will reconcile God to the sinner. We are told in John iii, 36, that faith will do this.

But the Savior, in Luke xviii, 9-14, related a parable to show how God becomes propitious—is reconciled to the sinner—the Pharisee and the Publican. Notice the description of the prayer of the publican: “And the publican, standing afar off, would not so much as lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” Here is the representation of some very earnest seeking—seeking which nowadays incurs considerable criticism, contempt, and condemnation from these reformers. Let it be noticed again that the word translated “be merciful” is *ἐλάσχωμαι*, which is translated by *reconcile* in Heb. ii, 17; and the verbal cognate of the noun *ἱλασμος*, propitiation, in 1 John ii, 2, and iv, 10. If, therefore, it had been translated “God be reconciled to me a sinner,” it would have been far more in harmony with the Scriptural use of the word. The marginal reading in the Revised Version has it “be propitiated to me the sinner.” So that a crying to God for personal reconciliation has the divinest of all sanctions.

With the teaching of this parable agree other teachings of the Savior concerning the value of intercessory prayer to the seeker of righteousness. In this same chapter he spake another parable to teach the value of importunity in prayer, “to this end, that men ought always to pray and not to faint;” then follows

the parable of the Unjust Judge and the Widow, which, if it teaches anything, teaches that God will wait, no doubt for the seeker's good, to be importuned. With this agrees Luke xiii, 24, when the Master says: "Strive [original, agonize] to enter into the strait gate; for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able." Also Matt. v, 6: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." A hungering and thirsting after righteousness, that is not characterized by earnest, importunate prayer, would be exceedingly peculiar.

All this opposition is predicated upon the theory that it is the duty of the penitent believer not to pray, but to obey. But the Word of God teaches him to pray, both in the examples above given, and in numerous clear and explicit precepts. Psa. xxvii, 8: "When thou saidst, Seek ye my face; my heart said, Thy face, Lord, will I seek;" Isa. lv, 6: "Seek ye the Lord while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near;" Lam. iii, 25; Amos v, 4 and 6; Acts xvii, 27, and others. With this agrees the comprehensive promise given by the apostle in Rom. x, 13, and quoted from Joel ii, 32: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." If this is not warrant sufficient for the penitent seeker's earnest praying, it is hard to conceive what would be sufficient for these teachers.

But it is asked, "Is not God willing to forgive

whenever the conditions are complied with?" Most surely. But mark, when the conditions are complied with, when repentance is genuine, thorough, complete; that is, godly sorrow for sin, faithful confession of sin, willingness to make all possible reparation for sin. The man who has injured his neighbor in person, property, or character, does not truly repent until he is willing to make it all right, so far as is in his power. After this, implicit faith in Jesus Christ. And it is right and wise for God to withhold the blessing until all the conditions are fulfilled, until the whole heart is enlisted in seeking and in the faith. If it requires importunacy in prayer to bring the soul of the disciple of Christ into the proper attitude of submission and faith, is it not likely to require self-examination, earnest seeking, and fervent prayer, to lead the seeker to that completeness of repentance that is called godly sorrow, and that implicitness of trust called faith of the heart? In the sinner's conversion "*faith towards* [or upon] the Lord Jesus Christ" must crown repentance toward God. He who ridicules intense earnestness in seeking pardon of sin, has but an exceedingly limited idea of what God requires of personal self-surrender in order to a godly life.

## CHAPTER XXI.

## CAMPBELLISM ON CREEDS AND DISCIPLINE.

ATTENTION has already been called to the fact that Alexander Campbell at first started out with the laudable purpose of bringing the Christian denominations into unity. The first organized effort made in this direction was in August, 1809, by his father, Thomas Campbell, and resulted in the formation of "The Christian Association of Washington,"\* in Washington County, Pennsylvania. This association promulgated a "Declaration" of principles, or an "Address," as it was styled, which, to the writer, as a bond of union, has, as far as it goes, all the characteristics of a creed; and when it proclaims in the concluding sentence that nothing shall be required of any one as a "matter of Christian faith or duty, for which there can not be expressly produced a 'Thus saith the Lord,' either in expressed terms or by approved precedent," the question naturally arises, Who will be the judge when a "Thus saith the Lord," either directly or by "approved precedent," is produced? It is right here where Christian creeds have

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\*"Richardson's Memoirs of A. Campbell," p. 240.



had their origin. It is a question of considerable possible disagreement as to what is an "approved precedent;" for all are compelled to concede that obligation rests not alone upon a specific and explicit "Thus saith the Lord," but upon inspired example, reasonable inference, and the analogy of faith.

There is no doubt but the purpose originally was to bring about Christian union, and establish a platform upon which all that do truly love the Lord Jesus Christ may stand. But Mr. Campbell was a man of strong convictions, and it was not long after the formation of his societies, until it was manifest that he was simply the founder of another denomination, that took the peculiar type of its faith from the teachings of its founder. The marvel is, however, that the self-deception has been perpetuated in the belief that they offer a basis broad enough for all true Christians to unite upon, and that they are any thing more than another denomination, with a peculiar creed, so narrow that nine-tenths of the Christian world can not subscribe to it. The facts prove this; either the Christian world in the main are hopelessly blind or peculiarly obstinate, or the oral creed of Campbellism is too circumscribed for anything like Christian unity.

But Mr. Campbell was, and his followers, treading exactly in his foot-steps, are wont to inveigh against human creeds. Mr. Campbell, in his debate with Professor Rice, affirmed the following proposition: "Human creeds, as bonds of union and communion,



are necessarily heretical and schismatical." This, in substance, the exponents of his doctrines are to-day ready to affirm. It is, however, entirely unnecessary to follow them through their argument against creeds; for these arguments are, by parity of reasoning, proven to be fallacious by their own promulgation and enforcement of a human creed. It is only a question between an oral and a written creed. The followers of Campbell have a very narrow oral creed, which they thrust at the individual who seeks admission among them—a creed that is very far from having any "Thus saith the Lord" for either one of its two fundamental requisitions, "Confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," and immersion in order to remission of sin.

Creed is from *credo*, I believe. Now, I can print this belief in short, formulated propositions, or I can simply publish it orally; but neither printing nor oral publication is necessary to make it a creed. It is a creed when it is a matter of belief. Most Christians print, in Confessions of Faith or Articles of Religion, what they believe the Bible to teach in certain matters regarded as fundamental or essential. This A. Campbell and his followers refuse to do. Is what they believe and require, because unpublished in a printed confession, any more the truth necessarily than what others believe?

Every one of Mr. Campbell's arguments against human creeds lies with equal force against *his unpub-*

*lished* creed; for by this unpublished creed his people will arraign, try, and exclude from their fellowship the individual who should teach otherwise among them. Take, for an example, the minister of the gospel among them who should come to the belief that sprinkling and pouring are proper modes of baptism, and go to preaching the same. Would they not exclude him, or sever connection with him? From what stand-point would this be done? From that of an oral creed, which certainly they can only claim to be their interpretation of the Scripture. The only difference between them and others consists in this, that the interpretation in other Churches has been formulated beforehand in a printed statement; in their case it is a written consensus of opinion among them, found in their doctrinal authors.

It has already been said that to every one who comes seeking admission among them they present their creed, asking of them a certain verbal confession, and immersion for a certain purpose. And this creed, though of few articles, is so narrow that nineteenth or more of as devout, holy, faithful, self-sacrificing Christians as are to be found in the world, will be excluded by it. Without fear of successful contradiction, it is the narrowest creed of all Protestant Christendom. It will even exclude the honest Baptist, though a believer in exclusive immersion.

The confession, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God," is nowhere in the Scriptures required

as a condition to salvation. The only place that in this form it exists is in Acts viii, 37, and this passage is rejected by the best commentators as spurious, and is not to be found in the Revised Version. Let it be remarked that the expression of the belief that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God" is not saving faith, but is a mere article of intellectual belief. Wicked men may, and some wicked men do, believe this. Devils believe it. There is a wide difference between this mere act of intellectual faith, and "believing *on* the Son of God." (John ix, 35.) The proposition that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God" is incomprehensible by mortals, for it involves the understanding of the mode of Divine existence. Mr. Braden,\* in opposing Article I of our Articles of Religion, says concerning its affirmation of the Trinity in Unity: "The Scriptures declare there is Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. These, then, are in some sense one; but they nowhere teach or explain how they are one. I do not know how they are one. I do not believe they are one; for I know nothing about it, and *I can not believe what I do not understand.*" The italics are given to call attention to the principle laid down. If faith must be an intelligent understanding of the subject believed, then the belief that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God" is a requirement utterly impossible. Now, while we do not agree with the idea that a proposi-

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\* "Hughey and Braden Debate," p. 518.

*The Mark of the Church is "Immersion in order to  
remission of sins."*

tion that is not comprehensible, can not be the subject of belief, yet it is true that the Scriptures do not require the belief of an incomprehensible proposition in order to salvation. To "believe *on* the Son of God" is to rest the faith of the heart for salvation on this divine personage whom the Bible calls "the Son of God."

The second article of this creed is to believe that immersion alone is baptism; and the third is to believe that it is a necessary condition for the remission of sins. Suppose, now, to illustrate the exclusiveness of this creed, a person who believes that baptism is necessary to the remission of sins, should believe that sprinkling is baptism, could he pass the narrow doctrinal gate? Who believes he could? Suppose, again, he should believe immersion is baptism, but at the same time believe it is not a condition to the remission of sin. He probably would pass because of being immersed; if so, it illustrates that the matter of form is omnipotent in this scheme, while the matter of belief is entirely unimportant. We are compelled to this view, because Alexander Campbell himself was not baptized with reference to obtaining the remission of sins by baptism; and also Baptist baptism is accepted by them to-day. Could any creed put salvation more absolutely in the outward form? In fact, immersion may go before faith, before repentance, and *be* for any other religious purpose, and the individual afterward get the benefit of it as a saving ordinance, but it must *not be omitted*.

But the creed of any denomination is not its printed and published Articles of Religion; for these are usually but partial, and limited to affirmations antagonizing what were believed to be errors at the time of their formulation. For example, the doctrines of the Methodist Episcopal Church are not all found in the Articles of Religion. But the doctrines of the various denominations are to be found in the general *consensus* of their doctrinal writers. Campbellism has a distinct and marked consensus. No leader in Protestantism in modern times has more completely stamped his peculiar doctrinal beliefs, and their mode of inculcation and defense, upon his followers, than has this man. It would not be difficult to write out his and their creed from his controversial affirmations and denials. It is true that all of this creed is not made a bond of union or communion among his followers; but enough of it is used to put a very specific denominational stamp upon the communicants of their Churches, and to make a doctrinal shibboleth, which is readily recognized anywhere, and discriminated from other Christian beliefs. The writer has frequently had occasion to note how completely in forms of statement, methods of argumentation, and interpretation, his followers conform to the model set for them by this their great leader, and yet no people have more to say about the trammels of creed and preconceived opinions. It is quite amusing at times to those who are familiar with Mr. Campbell's writings, to hear these



men proclaim their entire independence of human creeds while they are retailing even his exegetical blunders.

We have now shown that Campbellism has a creed in the consensus of its writers, and in the uniform usage of its societies—a creed that, in some of its doctrinal requirements, will bar a large part of the Christian Church out of its societies, and that in others will prohibit its teachers from inculcating among them numerous doctrines and beliefs held by other Christians; such as infant baptism, sprinkling and pouring as baptism, the necessity for the immediate witness of the Spirit, and the like.

Of course they claim that they condemn these by the Word of God. But who is the interpreter of the Word of God? They, themselves. And this is by implication to claim infallibility for their interpretation. It is a little singular that this Church that begins with a doctrine of salvation by works, must land at least in another of the claims of the Church of Rome, the infallibility of her doctrinal opinions.

There is no doubt but human creeds have been altogether too minute in their attempted definitions of doctrine, and too exacting; and that efforts were made to define some things that were incapable of definition, because beyond human comprehension; still this concession does not change the fact that creeds that are purely and only human—such because they are



men's opinions—must be made tests of faith and bonds of union and communion. Campbellism has just such a creed, and it is not any the less effectively used for this purpose, even though it is only to be found in the consensus of its writers. And yet their pulpits unceasingly ring with denunciations against the tyranny of creeds and their hindrance to Church union. The altogether *nonchalant* air with which they present their doctrinal scheme and Church polity as the one of divine institution, and as offering the only basis of Church union, is exceedingly surprising to people who have not the same confidence in their deductions that they seem to have. Their evangelistic propagandists generally dwell long and earnestly upon the evils of sectarian divisions, the divisive influence of printed creeds, the enthralling character of disciplinary requirements, and the sinfulness of sectarian names; and with an assurance that is truly amazing they will invite people to leave or avoid the sects, and join *the Christian Church*, as though their small organization of but yesterday defined the whole limits of the Church of Christ. What a comment on sectarian blindness!

Again, the same infallible certitude that they claim for their doctrinal teachings, they likewise claim for their Church polity. Their Church polity is what might be styled independent; that is, each local society has absolute control over all its affairs, both as to doc-

trine and government. Members pass between these separate societies by "letters of formal introduction."\* The rulers of these societies are called by them "elders," and they have about the entire government in their hands, except as they find it necessary to appeal to the congregation upon any question of general moment.

The question of Church polity is one that has been a subject of much discussion. This we do not intend to enter into. We believe there is no divinely instituted form of Church government. God has left this in its details to the Church; and whether it shall be connectional, as the Methodist Episcopal and the Presbyterian Churches, or Congregational, or Independent, we believe to be a matter of indifference. But it does, however, look reasonable that the Church, being a divinely ordained organization for the evangelization of the world, should have throughout that organic bond that will most effectually bring all its parts into unified effort for this purpose. Independence certainly can not do this, only as it organizes societies independently of the Church, and of which the Church at large is itself independent.

While the polity of the Methodist Episcopal Church is subject to modification by its legislative body, the General Conference, the polity of the Church founded by Alexander Campbell must remain forever

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\* "Christian System," ch. "Christian Discipline."

unchanged, for that is claimed by them to be of divine appointment. Should any bodies springing up among them come to believe that the polity might be lawfully changed, there would be two Churches, each claiming to be *the Christian Church*. Mr. Campbell has been the sole legislator for this Church. He is the founder of its economy, as well as the author of its doctrines. "The Christian Discipline," contained in "The Christian System," pages 85 to 90, lays down the discipline of this Church, that by which it *must* be governed for all time; for it was evolved by Mr. Campbell out of the New Testament. If so, it must be forever and unchangeably obligatory, according to their teaching. Is not this putting a great amount of confidence in one man? To-day the exact form of discipline presented in the "Christian System" by this one man is the absolute law of the Church. And yet they are wont to claim they have no discipline. It is true their societies have never adopted formally any form of discipline. Why? Because, in all essential matters of government, that was evolved out of the Word, according to their belief and teachings by Alexander Campbell, and all that is necessary now for them to do, is to go to the "Christian System," and ascertain what are its directions, when needed.

Now, suppose that, in some future period, some societies among them come to the conclusion that this discipline is not of divine ordainment, but that there

may be, and ought to be, some modifications of it; what is left for them but the establishment of another "Christian Church?"

The writer is aware of the fact that they, to some extent, recognize the law of expediency; but only in minor things; not in the matter of Church government, such as the entire independency of each society, the authority of the elders, and the exclusion of members for immorality or heresy. Again, even in matters of expediency Mr. Campbell has furnished them with disciplinary rules that they uniformly find it expedient to observe. Methodists no more carefully follow the forms of order in business laid down in our Book of Discipline than the followers of Campbell follow his directions in matters merely expedient.

The preachers of this denomination are accustomed to hold up to ridicule and public condemnation the system of probationship in the Methodist Episcopal Church, a system merely prudential, and that does not deprive any one of any of the spiritual privileges belonging to Church membership, such as the means of grace, the sacrament, and the helps of Christian fellowship; but only limits as to official privileges, such as holding certain offices, sitting in cases of Church trial, etc.; and accords the right of withdrawal without question, if dissatisfied with doctrines or polity, and accords the Church the right, without formal trial, if she is not satisfied with the Christian life or character of the probationer, to dismiss him.

This has been variously characterized as the "back porch" or "kitchen," or "anteroom" of the Methodist Church. After all this, would it be thought a matter within the range of possibility that this Church has a *system of probationship* also? Yet such is the fact—an indefinite probationship or novitiate. In their Discipline, "Christian System," page 88, "Christian Discipline," section 10, we have the following:

"The whole community act, and ought to act, in receiving and excluding persons; but in the aggregate it can never become judges of offenses and a tribunal of trial. Such an institution never was set up by Divine authority. No community is composed only of wise and discreet full-grown men. The Christian Church engrosses old men, young men, and babes in Christ. *Shall the voice of a babe be heard or counted as a vote in a case of discipline?* What is the use of bishops in a Church, *if all are to rule*; of judges, *if all are to be judges of fact and law*? No wonder that broils and heart-burnings and scandals of all sorts disturb those communities ruled by a democracy of the whole—where everything is to be judged in public and full assembly. Such is not the Christian system. It ordains that certain persons shall judge and rule, and that 'all things shall be done decently and in order.'"

I have italicized to call attention to the recognition of mere novitiates in the Church and the limitations put on them. Limitations, the exact counter-



part of those put upon probationers in the Methodist Church. But Methodists never regarded it a matter of Divine injunction, but only of Church expediency.

Mr. Wesley laid down at the head of the "General Rules" of the societies formed by him, the only true basis of Christian unity; namely, "A desire to flee the wrath to come and to be saved from their sins, and an evidencing of such desire by an avoidance of all manner of evil, and doing good in every possible way." The General Rules he wrote out are rules of Christian morality. He laid down no doctrinal test, as did Alexander Campbell; much less did he require conformity to a mere ordinance, in one special form, as a condition to Christian fellowship and also a condition to salvation. Mr. Wesley's "General Rules" could unite all Christians in one, through seeking after righteousness, until they come to unity in knowledge of the truth. Mr. Campbell's scheme would exclude, by a mere ritualistic performance, the vast majority of the Christian world, and keep them apart until they could see eye to eye in the mode of the observance of an ordinance. When their attention is called to this fact, with sublime innocency they tell us they require this because the Bible requires it; at once, by an inevitable implication, in the face of the honest convictions of a majority of Christians, claiming that their interpretation of the Scriptures is infallible.



Again, they are continually descanting upon union and Christian liberty, while, at the same time, they insist upon union in their own terms, and refuse to intelligent, conscientious, free, moral agents the determination of the mode in which, and the end for which, they shall receive a mere ritualistic ordinance. For centuries the Christian world has been contending about the mode, design, and import of water baptism; the best of Christians have been enlisted upon all sides of this question. The grace of God, in its effect on Christian character, life, and spirituality, has made no distinction among the disputants. Affusionists—pædobaptists—have manifested just as much faith, devotion, self-sacrificing, and have had just as much success, have died just as triumphant, as have those who fought for exclusive immersion and adult baptism alone. And yet, despite these indisputable facts, in this nineteenth century, there springs up a denomination that maintains that the only bond of Christian unity is immersion as a necessary condition to the remission of sins. In other words, that very ritualistic symbolism that has been the cause of more discussion, and about which there has been more honest division of opinion in the Church of all ages, is at once definitely settled by them in one mode, for one design, and to one import; and the Christian world are called upon to stop their disputing and come forward and accept the final settlement of this question. It is doubtful if it is possible to find

another example of more audacious dogmatism, of more profound confidence in their theories, and, necessarily because of these, uncharitableness towards other Christians, than this. And this is Campbellism!

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