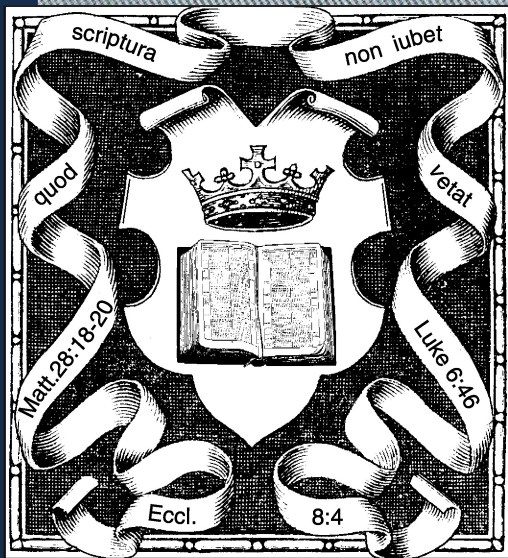
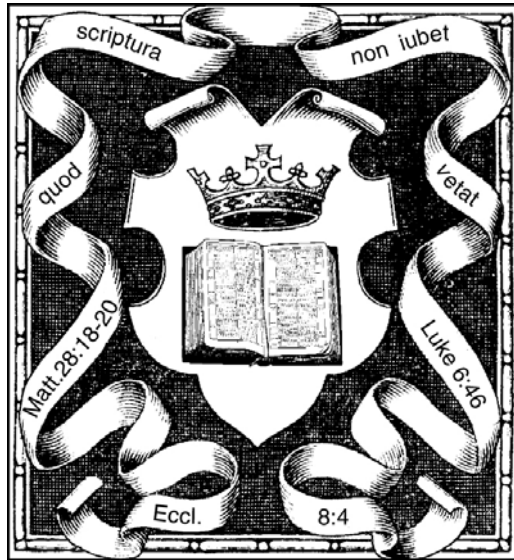


The Baptist Distinctives Series      Number 21



# The Design of Baptism

James A. Kirtley



## *Quod scriptura, non iubet velat*

The Latin translates, “What is not commanded in scripture, is forbidden:”

**On the Cover:** Baptists rejoice to hold in common with other evangelicals the main principles of the orthodox Christian faith. However, there are points of difference and these differences are significant. In fact, because these differences arise out of God’s revealed will, they are of vital importance. Hence, the barriers of separation between Baptists and others can hardly be considered a trifling matter. To suppose that Baptists are kept apart solely by their views on Baptism or the Lord’s Supper is a regrettable misunderstanding. Baptists hold views which distinguish them from Catholics, Congregationalists, Episcopalians, Lutherans, Methodists, Pentecostals, and Presbyterians, and the differences are so great as not only to justify, but to demand, the separate denominational existence of Baptists. Some people think Baptists ought not teach and emphasize their differences but as E.J. Forrester stated in 1893, “Any denomination that has views which justify its separate existence, is bound to promulgate those views. If those views are of sufficient importance to justify a separate existence, they are important enough to create a duty for their promulgation ... the very same reasons which justify the separate existence of any denomination make it the duty of that denomination to teach the distinctive doctrines upon which its separate existence rests.” If Baptists have a right to a separate denominational life, it is their duty to propagate their distinctive principles, without which their separate life cannot be justified or maintained.

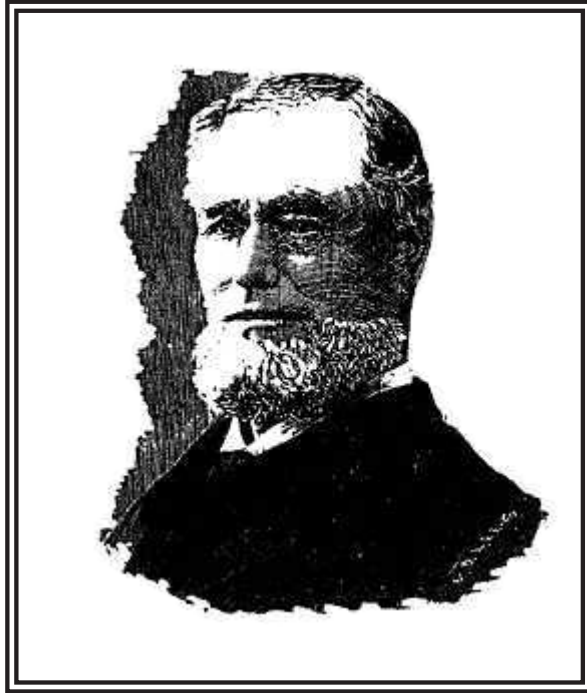
Many among today’s professing Baptists have an agenda to revise the Baptist distinctives and redefine what it means to be a Baptist. Others don’t understand why it even matters. The books being reproduced in the *Baptist Distinctives Series* are republished in order that Baptists from the past may state, explain and defend the primary Baptist distinctives as they understood them. It is hoped that this Series will provide a more thorough historical perspective on what it means to be distinctively Baptist.

The Lord Jesus Christ asked, “*And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?*” (Luke 6:46). The immediate context surrounding this question explains what it means to be a true disciple of Christ. Addressing the same issue, Christ’s question is meant to show that a confession of discipleship to the Lord Jesus Christ is inconsistent and untrue if it is not accompanied with a corresponding submission to His authoritative commands. Christ’s question teaches us that a true recognition of His authority as Lord inevitably includes a submission to the authority of His Word. Hence, with this question Christ has made it forever impossible to separate His authority as King from the authority of His Word. These two principles—the authority of Christ as King and the authority of His Word—are the two most fundamental Baptist distinctives. The first gives rise to the second and out of these two all the other Baptist distinctives emanate. As F.M. Jans wrote in 1894, “Loyalty to Christ as King, manifesting itself in a constant and unswerving obedience to His will as revealed in His written Word, is the real source of all the Baptist distinctives.” In the search for the *primary* Baptist distinctive many have settled on the Lordship of Christ as the most basic distinctive. Strangely, in doing this, some have attempted to separate Christ’s Lordship from the authority of Scripture, as if you could embrace Christ’s authority without submitting to what He commanded. However, while Christ’s Lordship and Kingly authority can be isolated and considered essentially for discussion’s sake, we see from Christ’s own words in Luke 6:46 that His Lordship is really inseparable from His Word and, with regard to real Christian discipleship, there can be no practical submission to the one without a practical submission to the other.

In the symbol above the Kingly Crown and the Open Bible represent the inseparable truths of Christ’s Kingly and Biblical authority. The Crown and Bible graphics are supplemented by three Bible verses (Ecclesiastes 8:4, Matthew 28:18-20, and Luke 6:46) that reiterate and reinforce the inextricable connection between the authority of Christ as King and the authority of His Word. The truths symbolized by these components are further emphasized by the Latin quotation - *quod scriptura, non iubet vetat*— *i.e.*, “What is not commanded in scripture, is forbidden.” This Latin quote has been considered historically as a summary statement of the regulative principle of Scripture. Together these various symbolic components converge to exhibit the two most foundational Baptist Distinctives out of which all the other Baptist Distinctives arise. Consequently, we have chosen this composite symbol as a logo to represent the primary truths set forth in the *Baptist Distinctives Series*.



**THE  
DESIGN OF BAPTISM,  
VIEWED IN ITS  
DOCTRINAL RELATIONS.**



**JAMES A. KIRTLEY**  
**1820-1904**

THE  
**DESIGN OF BAPTISM,**  
VIEWED IN ITS  
**DOCTRINAL RELATIONS.**

THE LEADING PASSAGES IN WHICH IT IS TAUGHT  
EXEGETICALLY TREATED AND EXPLAINED.

---

By JAMES A. KIRTLEY.

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*With an Appendix,*

CONTAINING

IMPORTANT CONFIRMATORY QUOTATIONS FROM NUMEROUS AUTHORS.

*With a Biographical Sketch of the Author by John Franklin Jones*

PUBLISHED FOR THE AUTHOR

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that it may be displayed because of the truth.  
-- Psalm 60:4

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“The Light Shineth in the Darkness”

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# PREFACE.

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An earnest and careful inquiry into the subject of the following treatise was undertaken by the author some years ago, chiefly with the view to inform his own mind and to fit himself the better to instruct those to whom he ministered, and especially those persons who, by the grace of God, were led to profess Christ in connection with his ministry. He was greatly surprised to find that, while tomes and epitomes had been written upon "the mode and subjects of baptism," so far as he could ascertain from the sources of information within his reach little else had appeared upon the scriptural object of the ordinance than a mere incidental allusion to it, a brief comment upon some passage of Scripture, or an occasional fugitive newspaper article on some disputed passage connected with the subject. Those portions of the word of God relating to the doctrinal import and scriptural design of the ordinance, he recognized as a part of the "all Scripture given by inspiration," and which were profitable to the man of God. Surely, it was not forbidden ground; but most certainly it seemed to be an unexplored part of the domain of theological truth.

Thoroughly convinced that if the true *idea* of the design of the ordinance was comprehended, and could be set forth in plainness and simplicity, in the Spirit of the Master, that it would both be edifying to Christians, and in all probability would be much more effectual in settling the doubts and perplexities of inquirers than

(iii)

the ordinary discussions of "the mode and subjects." Despairing of any reliable aid from extraneous sources,\* with his Greek and English New Testaments as his text-book, and with the assistance of Cruden's larger *Concordance*, he diligently and prayerfully set about the prosecution of his inquiry.

His first work was to collect all the passages of Scripture bearing upon the subject, and studying them carefully in their several connections, to ascertain, if possible, what was the leading, governing idea pervading them. He was impressed with the fact that the idea of unity ran throughout them all, pointing with more or less directness to the profession or declaration of a spiritual relationship to Christ by faith. That while some passages were little else than a plain declaration of the fact that its object was to profess Christ before men, others appear to have been used with a view to set forth particularly some leading feature of that common object.

The plan of treating the subject was conceived. The entire winter of 1858 and 1859 was devoted to the study of the subject. The result was a concise and carefully written essay of thirty pages of foolscap. Not satisfied, however, with the accuracy of some of his expositions, and the relative position to the subject assigned to several of the passages of Scripture introduced, he felt unwilling to give to the public the fruit of his labors, though solicited to do so.

During the intervening years the subject has been preached upon. Many points have been reviewed and studied with great care; certain positions then maintained have been receded from and new views have been reached.

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\*The only treatise on the subject of which he had any knowledge at that time was an essay by Dr. Samuel W. Lynd ; but even this he did not obtain for nearly a year afterward.

About two years ago, the author, believing that he could bring to the examination of the subject a wider range of Bible knowledge, a larger experience, a clearer perception, and a more accurate knowledge of many difficult and disputed passages of Scripture connected with the subject, set about in earnest the work of reconstruction, elaboration, and extension. Having communicated the plan of his treatise, and his views of the teaching of many portions of Scripture connected with the subject to several brethren of sound judgment and Bible knowledge, he has been urged by them to prepare the same for the press.

After very thoroughly reconstructing and greatly extending his original essay, and several times rewriting the whole, he has had the pleasure of reading a series of articles on the subject, from the pen of Dr. S. H. Ford, in *The Christian Repository*. The able and excellent little treatise of Dr. Ira Chase, originally preached before the Boston association of Baptist churches has fallen under his notice. Also a very clear and able discourse on "The Relation of Baptism to Salvation," by Professor R. M. Dudley.\* These several discussions of the subject, together with the essay of Dr. Lynd, have been carefully examined, and are found to contain many excellent and judicious reflections. The leading views of these authors having been previously embodied in his own work, whatever additional views and suggestions he has availed himself of, in a rewriting he has preferred taking up rather by assimila-

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\* The attention of the author has very recently been directed to a well-written and instructive work on the subject, by Prof. Turney, of Madison University. Also to an able and critical discussion of "The Idiom of the New Testament Greek," and the force of such idiomatic expressions, as occur in Mark i: 4, Acts ii: 38, Acts xxii: 16, by Prof. Farnam, L.L. D., in *The Christian Repository* for 1852. From these authors he has made quotations.

tion, than in the form of quotations. He has introduced no quotations from authors in the body of his work, preferring to maintain the original independent character of his treatise. Many important and valuable quotations, however, from distinguished authors, pertaining either to the main subject, or to some particular feature of the subject, have been arranged, under suitable headings, in an appendix, to which the reader is referred.

After much laborious research and thought, the author has been enabled to complete his work. In offering it to the public, he enjoys the satisfying consciousness that he has written for the truth's sake, and in no spirit of disputation. His simple object has been, the edification of the saints and the guidance of inquirers. He has sought to follow where truth led, irrespective of the views of his brethren or his own previous views. He trusts that he has written in the Spirit of the Master. During no period of his life has he cultivated with more assiduity the spirit of devotion than during the preparation of this work.

And now in the name of Jesus, whom he has sincerely sought to honor by this labor, this little unpretentious volume is offered as an humble contribution to the cause of truth.

THE AUTHOR.

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# INTRODUCTION.

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“BAPTIZE INTO, IN, UNTO, FOR,” IN CONNECTION WITH THE DESIGN OF BAPTISM.

The reader of the New Testament not unfrequently meets with the expressions, “baptize into,” “baptize in,” “baptize unto,” and “baptize for.” If he aims to form from its sacred pages a regular system of doctrine that shall be consistent and harmonious in all its parts, he often feels perplexed as to the force of these varied expressions. As a befitting introduction to the following thoughtful and earnest discussion of the “Design of Baptism,” we modestly propose an easy solution of the difficulty.

We think it will help the common reader to know—it is certainly a fact worthy of consideration—that when we look at the passages containing these various phrases, in the Greek, we do not find a variety of phrases corresponding to the Authorized Version. Instead, we find *one uniform* expression, which is thus variously *translated*. That form is the verb for baptize, with the preposition *eis*. Literally rendered, it would be,

“baptize into.” It occurs in the following passages, and is translated thus:

Matt. iii: 11: I indeed baptize you with water *unto* repentance.

Matt. xxviii: 16: Go . . . teach all nations, baptizing them *in* the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

Mark i: 4: John . . . did preach the baptism of repentance *for* the remission of sins. (Luke iii: 3.)

Acts ii: 38: Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ *for* the remission of sins.

Acts viii: 16: They were baptized *in* the name of the Lord Jesus.

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.

1 Cor. i: 13: Were ye baptized *in* the name of Paul? Also, ver. 15.

1 Cor. x: 2: And were all baptized *unto* Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

This same form occurs elsewhere, but these are the principal and most important passages where it is used to express the meaning or design of baptism. Before we proceed, a general remark or two.

A recent work by the first scholars of Europe says that this is the form used by the inspired writers when speaking “*of the end or purpose for which the baptism is effected . . .* In these cases, *eis* retains its proper significancy, as indicating the *terminus ad quem*, and, tropically, that for which or with a view to which the thing is done; modified according as this is a per-

son or a thing.”\* Now, since this is the form used by the inspired writers to express the meaning or design of baptism, would it not have been better if this form had had some set translation? Even if it had not helped us any in the sphere of interpretation, it would have lessened our perplexity concerning the unity of that design. Why distract our minds with baptism *unto* remission, *for* repentance, and *into* Christ, when in the Greek we have one unvarying expression? If *unto* be the right rendering, then let us have *unto* repentance, *unto* remission, and *unto* Christ. If *for*, then let us have *for* repentance, *for* remission, *for* Christ. If *into*, then let us have *into* repentance, *into* remission, *into* Christ. We do not plead for any particular translation; we plead merely for a uniformity, corresponding to that in the Greek.

The careful reader will observe that these passages may be divided into two classes:

1. We have “baptized *unto* Moses, *into* Christ, in the name of Paul, of the Lord Jesus, and of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.”

2. We have “baptized *unto* repentance, *for* remission, and *into* death.”

In regard to the first class, Dean Alford says that the expression rendered baptized *in* the name, where *eis* and not *en* is used, should always be rendered *into* the name. Something more is intended by the expression than that the baptism is administered by the authority of the person into whom one is baptized. Also Kitto, as quoted above, says of the expressions

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\* Kitto's *Biblical Cyclopædia*, edited by W. L. Alexander, D.D., etc., vol. i, Art. Baptism.

baptize *in*, and *into* the name, that some regard them as identical in meaning, "but the more exact scholars view them as distinct."

In regard to this same class of passages, we remark that to baptize into the name of any one is the same as to baptize into any one. To baptize into the name of Paul, or of the Lord Jesus, is the same as to baptize into Paul, or into the Lord Jesus. This, I suppose, none will question. Our inquiry, then, is narrowed down to this point: What is it to be baptized into any one—*e. g.*, the Lord Jesus? The learned Olshausen says that the meaning of baptism into the name of the Father, etc., is to be learned from 1 Cor. i: 13, and x: 2, where baptism into the name of Paul, and into Moses, is spoken of. Following this hint, let us look at 1 Cor. i: 13. In the church at Corinth there were contentions about leaders. They had even arrayed themselves in parties under the banner of their favorites. One party claimed Paul as its leader, another Cephas, etc. Against all this, Paul animadverted in the strongest terms, showing how unreasonable and groundless it was. He says: "Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized into the name of Paul?" To show them the folly of their parties, he reminds them of their one Lord, by whom they were redeemed, and into whom they were baptized. On this language, Bengel pithily remarks: "Crucified—baptized—the cross and baptism claim us for Christ. The correlatives are, redemption and self-dedication." Jamieson, Fausset, Brown, say: "The cross claims us for Christ as redeemed by him; baptism, as dedicated to him." Let it be remembered that Paul, to show the folly of their parties, recalls their baptism. Into whom were ye baptized? The force



and pertinence of this question depends on the fact that baptism into any one arrays the baptized under him into whom he is baptized. Whitby and Lowman, in their paraphrase of this passage, say: "Or were ye baptized in the name of Paul (so as to be called the disciples of Paul)?" Locke most forcibly says on this text: "The phrase 'to be baptized into any one's name, or into any one,' is solemnly, and by that ceremony, to enter himself a disciple of him into whose name he is baptized, with profession to receive his doctrines and rules, and to submit to his authority—a very good argument here why they should be called by no one's name but Christ's."

Let us now look at 1 Cor. x: 2: "All our fathers . . . were baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea." This refers to the passage of the Israelites through the sea. They had forsaken their homes to follow Moses. He was their leader and their deliverer. In an hour when they had looked for swift and awful destruction, he had delivered them from all their enemies, and led them dry-shod through the sea. How forcibly were they thus reminded of their relation to him! Whatever thoughts they may have had for themselves, their safety and their destiny, *now* they were fixed upon him. They saw clearly their dependence on him, and their subjection to him. It taught them to look to him, to trust him, and to obey him. Dr. Hodge says, "It made them the disciples of Moses; placed them under obligation to recognize his divine commission and authority." This was the moral significance to the Israelites, of their passage through the sea as it respected Moses; and so far forth the epistle heartily and forcibly calls it a "baptism into Moses." We see, too, that baptism into Moses is of the same general purport with baptism into Paul.

It should be borne in mind that the baptism into Moses was called a baptism because of its moral resemblance to the baptism into Christ; also, that the baptism into the name of Paul was supposed in the place of baptism into Christ. Hence the baptism into Moses and into Paul corresponds in moral significance to the baptism into Christ. It should also be remembered that baptism into Christ is identical with baptism into the name of the Son, and corresponds in significance to baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Holy Ghost, the only difference being the difference in the Persons into whom one is baptized. Baptism into Christ, or into Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, *is the solemn recognition of the relation we sustain to these divine Persons—a solemn recognition that we are pledged to them—to dependence upon them, and subjection to them.* We might safely rest the meaning of “baptized into” here, but there is one other of the first class of passages that demands particular attention. We refer to Gal. iii: 26, 27: “For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” There are two things asserted here in connection with “baptism into Christ” that are very important. 1st. We are told how we become children of God. It is “by faith in Christ Jesus.” Not only does faith go before baptism—it is an indispensable prerequisite to it; hence we become children of God before baptism. Nothing can be plainer and more certain. 2d. The apostle describes the baptism into Christ as putting on Christ. The putting on here indicated is like that of putting on one’s clothes. The noun form of the verb here rendered “put on,” means clothing, vesture, raiment, a garment. The same word is used in Matt. xxvii: 31: “And after they had mocked him, they

took the robe off from him, and *put* his own raiment *on* him, and led him away to crucify him." Also in Matt. xxii: 11: "And when the king came in to see the guests, he saw there a man which *had not on* a wedding garment." In 1 Cor. xv: 53, 54, it is used in reference to putting on that incorruptible and immortal body with which the spirit shall be clothed after the resurrection. Elsewhere it is used with reference to clothing ourselves with the disposition of Christ, etc. In this same general sense, baptism is called putting on Christ. Baptism is then an exterior covering with Christ. The "child of God" therein clothes himself in this beautiful garb. "They" [the baptized], says Locke, "are covered all over with him, as a man is with the clothes he has put on." Hence baptism is *external*; and hence, also, *professional*.

Let us now turn our attention to the *second* class of passages in which we have baptized into repentance, into remission, and into death.

We here repeat and emphasize our conviction as to the propriety of a set translation of these words that shall correspond to the original. Whatever that translation may be, let us have *uniformity*. If we have *unto repentance* in Matt. iii: 11, let us have *unto remission* in Acts ii: 38, and *unto death* in Rom. vi: 3, 4. Or, if we have *for remission*, let us have *for repentance*, and *for death*. Or, if *into death*, then let us have *into repentance* and *into remission*. By no means let us have *unto repentance*, *for remission*, and *into death*, in the *translation*, when the original is uniform.

But passing to the sphere of interpretation, we remark that these words mean that baptism is either *professional* or *procura-*

*tive.* It is either the celebration of the facts of repentance, remission, and death, in respect to us, or it is the means by which we procure repentance, remission, and death. If it is the celebration of the fact of repentance, it is also of the facts of remission and of death. If it is the means of procuring remission, it is also of procuring repentance and death. It can not be professional in the case of repentance, and procurative in the case of remission, but the *same* in both. The same also in the case of death.

Now, the fact that baptism into Christ, etc., is external and professional, is a presumption that the baptism into repentance, remission, and death, is also external and professional. It is a presumption that we put on repentance, put on remission, put on death. In other words, that baptism is an exterior covering of ourselves with repentance, remission, and death.

But there is something stronger than presumption in favor of this interpretation of Matt. iii: 11. When the Pharisees came to John Baptist and demanded this exterior covering of repentance (baptism), he refused it to them. He bade them "bring forth the fruits meet for repentance," before he would professionally clothe them with it in baptism. (Matt. iii: 7, 8.) And as with repentance, so in baptism we professionally clothe ourselves with remission and with death. This is necessarily so in the case of remission of sins, because, as we have seen, we become children of God by faith, and faith precedes baptism; hence we become children of God before baptism. If children of God, then heirs of God, and joint heirs with Christ, and as such possess all the blessings of the gospel of grace, either in prospect or in reality. Besides this, the gospel offers no car-

dinal blessing to men that is not *specifically connected with faith*—pardon, Acts x: 43; justification, Acts xiii: 19; peace with God, Rom. v: 1; purity of heart, Acts xv: 9; eternal life, John iii: 14, 15, 16; salvation, Acts xvi: 31; heavenly inheritance, Acts xxvi: 18. Besides this, the apostle tells us in Hebrews that water is for our bodies; the blood of Christ for our souls. Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water. (Heb. x: 22:) Here again is baptism represented as an *external* act, and is distinguished from the cleansing of the heart by the blood of Jesus, and is placed *after* it.

That the baptism into death is professional, will appear obviously so if we consider the significance and propriety of the figure the apostle there introduced. He calls the baptism into death *a burial*. To whom do the rites of sepulture pertain? Only to the *dead*. We *bury* the *dead*. It is only of dead persons that we could predicate a *burial*. Unless they were dead, it would be no burial. Any one familiar with the style of Paul, and especially with the precision and exquisiteness of his figures, could not be made to believe that he could have been guilty of so great an impropriety of speech as to call the baptism into death a burial, except as it was a rite for the dead. Now, as those who had brought forth fruit meet for repentance were, in baptism, professionally clothed with repentance, so those who have died indeed unto sin are, in baptism, professionally clothed with death to sin. So they who are baptized into remission of sins clothe themselves with remission of sins, not actually, but professionally, as they, not actually, but professionally clothe themselves, in baptism, with

repentance and death. We can not see either harmony or consistency in any other view.

We submit these remarks to the reader as the matured conviction of much diligent study and inquiry, though written hastily and under exceeding embarrassment.

R. M. D.

GEORGETOWN, KY., *May* 5, 1873.

“REASONS WHY BAPTISTS OUGHT TO TEACH THEIR DISTINCTIVE VIEWS . . . First, *it is a duty we owe to ourselves*. We must teach these views in order to be consistent in holding them. Because of these we stand apart from other Christians, in separate organizations. . . We have no right thus to stand apart unless the matters of difference have real importance; and if they are really important, we certainly ought to teach them.”

JOHN A. BROADUS

*The Duty of Baptists To Teach Their Distinctive Views.*  
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1881).

“No religious denomination has a moral right to a separate existence unless it differs essentially from others. Ecclesiastical differences ought always to spring from profound doctrinal differences. *To divide Christians, except for reasons of gravest import, is criminal schism*. Separate religious denominations are justifiable only for matters of conscience growing out of clear scriptural precept.”

J. L. M. CURRY

*A Baptist Church Radically Different From Paedobaptist Churches.*  
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1889).

“There is something distinctive in the principles of Baptists. They differ from all other denominations; and the difference is so great as not only to justify, but to demand, their separate existence as a people . . . What distinctive mission have the Baptists, if this is not their mission? - to present the truth in love on the matters wherein they differ from Pedobaptists. What is there but this that justifies their separate denominational existence and saves them from the reproach of being schismatics? *If they have a right to denominational life, it is their duty to propagate their distinctive principles, without which that life cannot be justified or maintained.*”

J. M. PENDLETON

*Distinctive Principles of Baptists.*  
(Philadelphia: American Baptist Publication Society, 1882).

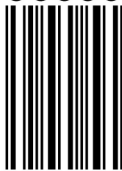
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