

a community called ...

The Copyright law of the United States (title 17, United States code) governs the making of photocopies or other reproductions of copyrighted material. Under certain conditions specified in the law, libraries and archives are authorized to furnish a photocopy or other reproduction. One of these specific conditions is that the photocopy of reproduction is not to be “used for any purpose other than private study, scholarship, or research.” If a user makes a request for, or later uses, a photocopy or reproduction for purposes in excess of “fair use,” that user may be liable for copyright infringement. This institution reserves the right to refuse to accept a copying order if, in its judgment, fulfillment of the order would involve violation of copyright law.

By using this material, you are consenting to abide by this copyright policy. Any duplication, reproduction, or modification of this material without express written consent from Asbury Theological Seminary and/or the original publisher is prohibited.

© Asbury Theological Seminary 2011



IS DIPPING-IMMERSION CHRISTIAN BAPTISM?

THE BAPTIST THEORY.

Baptist. Christian Baptism is commanded by God. It requires a definite act. To substitute any other act disobeys God and annuls the ordinance. Disobedience forfeits right to the true Lord's Supper, to the true Church-membership, to the true Christian ministry, and to the true Church of Christ. All Christians not having obeyed this act should re-examine the subject.

Inquirer. Will you help me to such “re-examination?” What is that *definite act* which God commands?

B. The act is *dipping*. The thing to be dipped is *the whole body*. The dipper must be *a true minister of Christ*.

I. That is explicit. How were you baptized?

THE BAPTIST PRACTICE.

B. I was baptized by walking into the water to “a proper depth, two feet nine inches,” and Dr. Jordan dipping the rest of my body.

I. How was that two feet nine inches you speak of baptized?

B. By walking.

I. Who baptized it?

B. I did.

I. You, then, are “a true minister of Christ?”

B. O no; I am not a minister.

I. How much of your body did Dr. Jordan dip?

B. I am five feet six inches. I put under water two feet nine inches by walking, and the Doctor put under the water two feet nine inches by dipping.

I. Then you baptized one half of your body by *walking*, and Dr. Jordan baptized the other half by *dipping*?

B. Yes, I suppose so.

I. Did you say that God commanded *two* definite acts, walking and dipping; *two* administrators, a layman or laywoman, and “a true minister;” and *one half* of the body to be baptized by walking and *one half* to be baptized by dipping?

B. By no means. God commands but *one* act; but *one* administrator; and the *whole* body to be baptized by the minister.

I. Has the Baptist Church a special privilege from God to change his ordinances—

to substitute the act of walking for the act of dipping—to clothe laymen and laywomen with ministerial functions, and to assign to them the baptism of one half of the body, and to “the true minister” the baptism of the other half of the body?

B. That is not the way we put it.

I. Is it the way of the facts? Is it the way you were baptized?

B. Pretty much so.

I. I am “re-examining.” And the case seems to stand thus: God commands one act, while you substitute another; God commands “a true minister” to administer baptism, and you substitute a man or a woman who is not a minister at all; God commands the whole body to be “dipped,” while you except half the body and baptize it by walking. Is this so?

B. Baptize means *to dip*. And God commands us to dip; but it would be very inconvenient to obey this command and dip

the whole body ; so we change the commanded *dip* to the more convenient *walk*, and allow the man or the woman to baptize themselves, so as to make it convenient for the “true minister” to dip so much as remains out of water.

I. I am learning. The present lesson which you teach me is, *Change God’s commands to suit* CONVENIENCE !

B. Sometimes we can obey the command without much trouble. I have seen a young female (small and light) taken in the minister’s arms and the whole body dipped. But it is not “convenient,” generally, to do this.

DIPPING.

I. I am “re-examining.” Are you sure that baptize means “*to dip?*”

B. O ! quite sure. “Baptism is dipping and dipping is baptism.” “Baptize means dip, and nothing but dip.”

I. Do you read the "National Baptist" and the "Baptist Quarterly?"

B. Regularly.

I. Do you remember the "National Baptist" saying, in a review of "Dale's Classic Baptism," "He has established a difference between *dip* and baptize?" and the "Quarterly" saying, "Baptize never takes out what it puts in? We must get rid of *dipping*?"

B. Those sentiments bothered me.

I. Do you remember Dr. Fuller rejecting "dip," and saying, "Water *poured* over a man lying down, if it covered would baptize him?" And that "the altar on Mount Carmel was baptized by water *poured* on it, because it made it *very wet*?"

B. I remember. And when I have seen a person, not heavy, *dipped all over*, and the dipping called baptism; and a heavy person *walking* into the water and *half dipped*, and that act called baptism; and

when I have read of a man *lying down* and water *poured* over him till covered, and that pouring called baptism; and an altar with water *poured* over it till it was not covered but made *very wet*, and that wetting called baptism, I have been perplexed, and felt like taking the advice of our "Quarterly," and "getting rid of DIP."

IMMERSE.

I. I am "re-examining," under your counsel. Am I to believe that baptize does *not* mean "to dip?"

B. Our papers, and books, and pulpits, and New Bible are all "getting rid of dip." It is plain that we must say, with Dr. Fuller," "My position is, that baptize means *immerse*."

I. Does "immerse" mean a definite act?

B. To give up "definite act" would ruin us. Booth and Fuller say, "Tyrants and fools only could expect two definite acts to

fulfill a law commanding one definite act.”
 This law must command a definite act.

I. What was the definite act in the baptism of the sea-shore by the tide?

B. *Rising up* of the tide.

I. What was the definite act in the baptism of the ship of Josephus at the bottom of the Adriatic sea?

B. *Sinking down*.

I. Then baptize means one definite act, TO IMMERSE, as proven by these two acts so expressly alike—*to rise UP, to sink DOWN*. How long is it since ‘tyrants and fools’ commanded TWO *definite and contradictory* acts by the one definite act “immerse?”

B. You are hard on us.

I. Excuse me, I am “re-examining.” It strikes me that one definite act will represent two diverse definite acts just so soon as RED represents black and white, and 2 represents 3 and 4.

B. Immerse has a bad chance for “defi-

nite act.” We must at all events hold on to *covering over*.

I. How long does the covered condition of your immerse last?

B. One moment; we put in and immediately take out.

I. Your immerse, then, goes back to *dip*. To DIP puts in and takes out. It covers for a moment. It cannot cover protractedly. It would run into the domain of another word. IMMERSE covers without limit of time. It cannot mean to cover for a moment. That would invade “dip.” You have abandoned dip as impracticable. You cannot take him back under other spelling. How long has the “baptized” ship of Josephus been covered in the sea? How long have the Jews “baptized” with their ships by the Romans been “covered” in Lake Gennesareth?

B. About two thousand years.

I. Then how is it that you use “immerse,”

which covers for two thousand years, to express a covering which is sharply limited to a moment?

B. We must do it. We would drown men if we did not do it.

I. Have you not deceived yourself by rejecting *the word* "dip" as unsuitable to represent "baptize," while you have retained *the act* which dip represented, and which was the thing which should have been discarded? And are you not in a like trouble, in attempting to make "immerse" to fit on to your *dipping*, that you were in trying to make "dip" to fit on to cases of *baptizing*? Neither can be done. You teach that a word used by the Greeks *to drown* men is used by God *to baptize* men in water. And because this would drown, you draw your sword through the knot by giving to the word the right opposite meaning to that which belongs to it. Do you mean to place this divine command to bap-

tize in that list of commandments by “tyrants and fools” of which you just now spoke?

B. Our case has not turned out very well; but you should not turn our own weapons so sharply against us.

NO COMMAND TO PUT INTO WATER.

I. I have engaged in this “re-examination” at your suggestion. But if it hurts I will stop. Before parting, allow me to ask one question. Have you thought that all your perplexity may have arisen from mistaking God’s command to baptize *with* water for a command to baptize *into* water? Therefore the necessity to add *walking* to the act of baptizing; and of a *layman* or a *laywoman* to the true administrator; and of a *self-baptism* of half of the body to the commanded baptism; and the necessity to substitute *a word of one class*, expressing condition, for *a word of another*

class, expressing action ; and to substitute a word expressing *time unlimited* for a word expressing *time limited*. Let me counsel you, in turn, to “re-examine” a system which rejects God’s baptism *into* REPENTANCE, *into* THE REMISSION OF SINS, *into* CHRIST by the Holy Ghost, with its symbol baptism by pure water poured or sprinkled on the body ; substituting for it (as a “convenience”) walking into the water, and self-baptism of half of the body, (as a “necessity”,) thus changing a baptism into a *dipping-immersion*, to save from drowning.

B. I see there is more in this question than I had thought of. I will take to myself the advice which I gave to you, and RE-EXAMINE.

PHILLIPS & HUNT, 805 Broadway, New York.

TRACT DEPARTMENT.

No. 2.