

THE ILLUSTRATED BOOK OF ALL RELIGIONS
From The Earliest Ages to The Present Time...
Compiled From Their Own Publications, and
Viewed from Their Own Standpoint.

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[NOTE FROM MIKE AYLESTOCK: This book, written in the 1800's, presents what the Baptists believed about different doctrines. This lengthy quote addresses baptism and lists nine reasons why water baptism is obligatory today. In the course of arguing for water baptism they made an interesting statement about the baptism of the Spirit. The universal church theory rises and falls on the doctrine of the baptism of the Spirit. If there is today no baptism of the Spirit as happened on the day of Pentecost, then I Corinthians 12:13 states that water baptism places one into the body of Christ. That body is then a local body rather than a universal body... unless you believe that water baptism saves you! See reason #9.]

BAPTIST CHURCH

This church comprehends the several Christian Denominations who differ from other evangelical branches of the Christian Church in their views of the mode of Baptism, and of the proper recipients of the ordinance the Baptism of believers only, and the mode of that Baptism only by immersion.

The two great peculiarities of the Baptist denomination respects the mode and subjects of baptism.

In support of their views respecting the **MODE**, they maintain that the Greek word of which baptism is but the English form, properly and exclusively signifies immersion, and that, consequently, the command to baptize can only be fulfilled in this manner. Hence the idea entertained by many that the application of water in any way, by sprinkling, pouring, or plunging, is equally legitimate, according to the design of the institution, they utterly repudiate. In the critical discussion of the subject, some of their body also zealously argue that immersion is not at all a mode of baptism, but is baptism itself; on the same ground, that to represent immersion as a mode of immersion would be a palpable absurdity; and this would seem obvious enough if it be admitted that the Greek term can only be represented by the word immersion.

With regard to the **SUBJECTS** of baptism, the distinction of the Baptists from other denominations of Christians is, that they require a personal profession of faith in Christ as an indispensable requisite to the ordinance. They insist on the absolutely personal nature of true religion, which is none of its acts can be performed by proxy, or that those who are unconscious, as infants, of what is done, can be members of the Christian Church, or competent to its institutions; that, in fact, the concurrence of the sanctified mind is the essential element of all obedience.

The Baptists plead the various instances recorded in the New Testament as confirmatory of their views of what they distinctively denominate "believer's baptism," as exclusively theirs.

Those baptized by John confessed their sins. (Matt. 3:6) The Lord Jesus Christ gave the command to teach and baptize. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16) At the day of Pentecost, they who gladly received the word were baptized, and they afterwards continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship. (Acts 2:41, 42, 47) At Samaria, those who believed were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12) The eunuch openly avowed his faith (in reply to Philip's statement If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest), and went down into the water and was baptized. (Acts 8:35, 39) Saul of Tarsus, after his sight was restored, and he had received the Holy Ghost, arose and was baptized. (Acts 9:17,

18) Cornelius and his friends heard Peter, received the Holy Ghost, and were baptized. (Acts 10:44-48) Lydia heard Paul and Silas; the Lord opened her heart, and she was baptized, and her household. Paul afterwards went to her house and comforted the brethren. (Acts 16:14, 15, 40) The jailor, and all his house, heard the word, and were baptized, believing and rejoicing in God. (Acts 16:32, 34) Crispus, and all his house, and many Corinthians, heard, believed, and were baptized. (Acts 18:8) The disciples of Ephesus heard and were baptized. (Acts 19:5) The household of Stephanus, baptized by Paul, were the first fruits of Achaia, and addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints. (I Cor. 1:16; 16:15) In opposition to many who deny the perpetuity of baptism, the Baptists maintain that the ordinance is as obligatory at the present time as it was at its first institution; ***assigning the following reasons for this persuasion:***

1. That Baptism was divinely instituted as an ordinance of the Christian religion, and administered by inspired apostles to both Jews and Gentiles, is plain from the preceding remarks.

2. There is no intimation that the law of baptism was designed to be restricted to any nation, or limited to any period of time. It is a general law, without any restriction, except that which refers to character "he that believeth."

3. A Divine law must continue obligatory until it is repealed by Divine authority. There is no intimation in the Scriptures that the law of baptism has been repealed, and therefore there is no reason to suppose its obligation has ceased.

4. The permanent duration of the ordinance is plainly implied in the promise, "Lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." (Matt. 28:19, 20) This important promise was given at the time the ordinance was instituted, and it plainly supposes the continuance of baptism "even to the end of the world."

5. Baptism is connected with the most important doctrines, duties, and privileges of the Gospel. The Saviour connects it with the

doctrine of the Trinity; preaching and believing the Gospel; fulfilling all righteousness; and the promise of salvation. (Matt. 3:15; 28:19; Mark 16:16) Paul connects it with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ; with the believer's dying unto sin, living unto God, and putting on Christ. (Rom. 6:3, 4; Gal. 3:27) He connects it also with "one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one God and Father of all." (Eph. 4:4-6) Peter connects it with the "remission of sins." (Acts 2:38) And also with salvation and a good conscience. (I Peter 3:21) To discontinue the ordinance would be to dissolve its connection with all these doctrines, duties, and privileges. And who, without authority from the Divine Author of the institution, can do this with impunity?

6. Baptism answers all the purposes at this day which it answered in the first age of Christianity, and these are needful now as they were then. No reason can be assigned for the observance of the ordinance in the apostles' days, which will not apply in all its force to believers in every age of the Christian Church.

7. The above considerations afford incontestible proof of the perpetuity of Christian baptism, and show that its observance is as obligatory at present as it was in the days of the apostles; and that it will continue to be as obligatory until the consummation of all things.

8. It being thus evident from the Scriptures that baptism is designed by the Head of the Church to be co-existent with the Gospel system, as a constituent part of it and co-extensive with repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, it is manifestly a great error to imagine that the obligation to baptism has ceased. There is not the slightest foundation for such opinion; against it there is the strongest evidence. Should this fall into the hands of any who dispute this statement, we would entreat them seriously to consider whether they are not, through their mistaken opinions regarding the perpetuity of water baptism, doing great dishonor to the Saviour by disobeying his command, and to the Holy Spirit by rejecting his written will, in setting

aside what the Scriptures so plainly teach to be binding on all believers to the end of the world.

9. To suppose that the necessity of water baptism is superseded by the baptism of the holy Ghost, is manifestly erroneous on two accounts:

First: There is now, in the Scriptural sense of the words, no baptism of the Spirit. No miraculous gift, no converting operation, no sanctifying influence of the Spirit, is ever, by the inspired writers, called the baptism of the Holy Ghost, except what took place on the day of Pentecost, and at the first calling of the Gentiles in the house of Cornelius. On these two occasions the promise of baptism in the Holy Ghost was fulfilled, and in reference to no other events do the sacred writers speak of the baptism of the Holy Ghost. The bestowment of the Spirit on these two occasions is quite different from every former and every subsequent bestowment of the Spirit, so far as our knowledge extends. As the Word of God mentions no other baptism in the Holy Ghost than what took place at Pentecost, and in the house of Cornelius, we have no warrant to expect that Scriptural baptism of the Spirit in the present day. We

may, indeed, experience the converting and sanctifying influences of the Holy Spirit, but these influences are not the Scriptural baptism of the Spirit, nor ought we to call them the baptism of the Spirit. But if there is now, in the Scriptural sense, no baptism of the Spirit, how can we reasonably suppose that baptism in water is rendered unnecessary by our being baptized in the Spirit?

Secondly: Just suppose every believer was as truly baptized in the Spirit as Cornelius was, this would in no wise diminish his obligations to be baptized in water. Did not the Apostle Peter command the Pentecostal converts to be baptized? And is it not expressly recorded that they were baptized? Did not the same inspired apostle command Cornelius and his friends to be baptized in water, and assign their being baptized in the Holy Ghost as a reason for their being baptized in water? "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" Is it not passing strange that what an inspired apostle urged as a reason for the observance of water baptism, should be adduced by some professing Christians as a reason for their neglect of that baptism?