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### BAPTISMAL REGENERATION, THE GREAT PAGAN IDOL.

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## FOREWORD

Great sorrow of heart accompanied many a message given by the men of God in times past. Kinship was sacrificed upon the altar of truth: "It pleased Jehovah to bruise Him." "Woman, what have I to do with thee"?

For years my spirit was heavy with a burden pertaining to Baptismal Regeneration, but loyalty to traditional standards disparaged even an unbiased study, until the burden became so heavy that its very weight brought travail of soul, which resulted in the birth of the following message.

A long, careful and prayerful study brought conviction. This came on a Friday evening, and the following Sunday morning I resigned from my congregations in order to properly respect the constitutions of my congregations which I had affirmed to honor. I believe in fair play, so I asked for an immediate release. No personal issues entered in, either with the Lutheran church at large, or with my three congregations, my first and only charge, where I had served for nineteen years, as fine and loyal a people as I ever expect to meet.

Personal rancor and vindictiveness do not enter into this article. My only purpose is to give testimony to "the Faith which was once for all delivered to the Saints." For this we are commanded to contend. I have no word of censure for the great body of Lutheran doctrine founded on God's Word. I love the Lutheran people, and there are many wonderful Christians among them, and if the constitutions of the congregations allowed, I would gladly labor among them as heretofore.

Do not think that this step was

lightly taken. Only the weightiest consideration for the welfare of souls entered in. The suffering both mentally and physically which such a step entails is indescribable. I sought other honorable ways out, but there were none. I was well aware that such a step would cost me our living, close every door to me in the only church I could look for open doors, destroy my reputation, and bring in endless misunderstanding on every hand.

Baptismal Regeneration had not come to me from my study of Scripture. I had been taught it. I just accepted it as such. The conviction that gripped me as I studied the Bible was irresistible. Hard as it was to think of losing my reputation, life-calling and living, yet still harder it was to resist what I understood to be the light from God's Word. Considering my responsibility to souls, and looking ahead to the day when I should give account to God for my ministry, grace was given to take the step.

We seek but to unloosen a bond which we believe binds millions of precious souls. Tragic it is, when more power is attributed to the magic touch of a moistened hand than it took to create the universe. Tragic, tragic it is to say the least, that millions of precious souls shall be held in bondage by the power of a magical mixture, the formula for which comes not from the Bible but from Pagan Babylon.

Some say, why stir up trouble about a question of such minor importance as Baptismal Regeneration. Is a so-called door to heaven a small issue? Spurgeon says: "For of all lies which have dragged millions down to hell, I look upon this Baptismal Regenera-

tion), as being one of the most atrocious," McGlothlin (able scholar and writer) says: Baptismal Regeneration is "the deadliest heresy that ever crept out of the pagan religions in to the faith of the Christian Church."

This is written in obedience to what the writer understands to be God's will for him, and in compliance with the request of many laymen and prominent pastors who have asked that he elaborate on his views on Baptismal Regeneration and give

them the widest possible circulation, to the end that it may help to awaken and revitalize the church with the spirit of revival of old-fashioned Bible salvation, in which sinners shall cry out with the Philippian jailer, saying: "What must I do to be saved?" and the answer shall be Not Through A Legalistic System Of Water and Works, but through a genuine new birth, wrought in the sinner's heart by the Holy Spirit through the Word of God.

## INTRODUCTION

Who Is Our Brother, Sister And Mother?

"For whosoever shall do the will of my Father who is in heaven, he is my brother, and sister, and mother." We are well aware that we must tread none too lightly on tender feelings in many a heart, and if personal feeling had been considered, this treatise would never have been written. We are also aware of what it cost Jesus to open for us heaven's door; yes to become heaven's door for us: The gaping wounds, the gushing flesh of His broken body, the downrush of God's wrath upon sin which disjointed every bone in His body and melted Him like wax, so He was poured out like water. If this, and much more is what it cost Him to become our door, then it is a serious matter to attribute saving power to baptism, so that it becomes a false door to millions. Now the issues are clear so far as the Lutheran church is concerned; Book of Concord, page 468: "The power, work, profit and fruit and end of baptism is to save."

The Author's Lutheran Background

Having been a pastor for nineteen years in the Lutheran church, I would address a word especially for Lutherans. It must be evident that your spiritual cradle was mine; your spiritual experiences and problems have been mine. No spirit of malice prompts the words of this book. They are born of a deep conviction of heart that Baptismal Regeneration is a carry-over from Papal Rome, which has become a false door to millions of precious souls; without which door this perverted system of Rome could never have been and never could be. Should Rome seek to build her con-

gregations only of such as have had a true born-again experience, how large would her congregations be? Is it not a fact well known to all that there are many, even Lutheran congregations, where it is hard to find a professing Christian? When conducting meetings in a certain congregation, I said to the godly and elderly pastor, "You have many confessing Christians in your congregation, I suppose"?

"To tell you the truth," he said, "though this congregation is more than forty years old, I can count on the fingers of my one hand the number, that so far as I can judge, are truly born again."

This is not an unusual case. Instead of being admonished to seek the new birth through a real experience, they have been told that they were born again in baptism. This has produced a fatal spiritual sleep in the hearts of millions. Bad enough to be spiritually asleep and know it. Still worse to be spiritually asleep and not know it. But the climax in deception is reached, when men are spiritually asleep, and not knowing it, are constantly told they are awake and are good Christians because they have been BAPTIZED and confirmed and fulfill certain outward obligations. These are they who have a name to live, but are dead. Someone had told them they were alive, although they knew it not. Knowing from long experience that this is true of multitudes, I would be a traitor to these souls if I did not sound the strongest warning I am capable of. "Ye must be born again." To give this testimony we had to give up a good salary, position, and endure the closing of every door to us in the Lutheran

an Church where we had labored for nineteen years. This should assure everyone that it is love that prompts these words.

#### My First Case of Baptism

Stopping at a pastor's home while yet a student at college, I was asked to baptize a baby. As I performed this ceremony, I could not but greatly marvel at the power of baptism. Although no prejudice of any kind entered in, yet when I was through, a cloud of doubt came over me, and I spoke almost involuntarily, saying to myself, "there is something wrong here."

If such was the case so early in life, you say, how could you later on as pastor continue to baptize children

into regeneration? Like many others I considered it but a temptation, and diligently sought to strengthen my faith through the study of Scriptures, all the while contending, that here especially, I must let reason be a will-  
ing captive of faith; and that in as much as others baptized so, it must be right whether I could see it or not. I thus forced my faith to hold on, refusing even so much as to study evidence to the contrary, until circumstances drove me to do so. After a long and careful a study as I was capable of, I reached my conclusion to the opposite. Then it was my duty to state my convictions openly and not hide them. The evidence that compelled me to believe that baptism does not regenerate, is set before you in the following pages.

## CHAPTER ONE

### TESTIMONY FROM THE OLD TESTAMENT.

#### No Baptism From Adam To Christ A Period Of 4000 Years.

For 4000 years from Adam to Christ is a long time, and hundreds of millions of people had been dealt with, both infants and adults. It seemed rather peculiar that if baptism was an instrument absolutely necessary for salvation, that the Holy Spirit should in the eleventh chapter of Hebrews picture for us so many of God's choicest saints,—saved people every one of them, and some of them seen in glory with Christ—yet not one of them had been baptized. No stronger evidence should be necessary for the average man than this to convince him that baptism is not necessary to salvation. Whoever heard of baptism justifying anyone, or sanctifying and glorifying anyone? Moses and Elijah were seen with Christ justified, sanctified and glorified, and that wholly without baptism.

Baptism is necessary as a testimony and because God has commanded it, but not necessary to salvation. If God Himself goes on record, and the record is there, it cannot be denied that men were saved without baptism, then what can there be to argue about? We cannot say that faith in Christ could save during the Old Testament dispensation and not in the New. This would make faith in Christ more powerful before He came to die than after He had died. This would declare that the death and resurrection of Christ had rendered Him impotent.

Clever, indeed, must be he who would build even a plausible argument from the meager evidence Scripture offers for Baptismal Regeneration. Indeed, he greatly puts to shame even the peripathetic wayfarer who taught the all too trusting housewife how to cook soup on a nail.

Like the poor natives in the famine stricken areas of China, where not a green spear remains for food, are driven by circumstances to cook soup out of clay. Soup they get, and it fills the stomach, but it also causes a slow agonizing death. Rome in seeking to build up the doctrine of Baptismal Regeneration was so hard pressed, that she had to take for evidence that which was not evidence at all. Out of the mess she got not heavenly manna, but just clay soup. Baptismal Regeneration is just such clay soup.

Was There Saving Power in Circumcision? Does Baptism Take The

#### Place of Circumcision?

Some say, they did not have baptism, but they had circumcision. No they did not even have circumcision from Adam to Abraham,—nearly 2000 years. Circumcision was first given to Abraham, a grown man, twenty-four years after he had been declared saved by faith by God Himself. Commenting on circumcision as given to Abraham, the Holy Spirit tells us in the fourth chapter of Romans that Abraham, "received the sign of circumcision, a Seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had while he was in uncircumcision." Clearly, positively, definitely, and without any possibility of misunderstanding, therefore, the Holy Spirit tells us that Abraham was a saved man before he was circumcised.

What endless confusion results when saving power is attributed to anything but Christ. This is a carry-over from Romish Sacramentalism and is an indispensable instrument of Sacerdotalism. Most of the Protestant churches threw this overboard several hundred years ago. Why

should the Lutheran church stand so conspicuously joined to the Catholic Church in holding on to this Romish ring of a doctrine when practically every other Protestant Church rejects it? Since Luther called the Pope the Antichrist, and many able Lutheran theologians point to the church of Rome as the great whore of Revelations seventeen, does it not appear that they are just in the wrong crowd on Baptismal Regeneration? I seek but to cleanse the church.

In as much as circumcision is one of the three fundamental arguments upon which infant baptism and Baptismal Regeneration are built we would like to present the following for consideration:

That men were saved by grace in the Old Testament dispensation we believe to be conceded by all. Therefore, if circumcision was a door to heaven even as baptism, we still have the first 2000 years to account for before circumcision was given. How did the infants get in then?

Since circumcision was only for male children, then what provision was made for the female children?

How shall we find saving power in circumcision in as much as Abraham got it 25 years after he had been declared saved by faith?

It is contended that like as circumcision was a sign of the New Covenant in the Old Testament times, so baptism is now a sign of the New Covenant. In this connection it is well to notice that as such it could have had no saving power. For Abel, Enoch, Noah and Abraham were all saved by faith, long before circumcision was given. If baptism is now a sign of entrance into the New Covenant as circumcision was, then it is a most unhappy sign for such as must find saving power in baptism, for there was no saving power in circumcision. The sprinkled blood was the characteristic seal of the New Covenant, as we read in Hebrews

9:19-20, "For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses unto all the people according to the law, he took the BLOOD of the calves and the goats, with water and scented wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself and all the people, saying, 'This is the blood of the Covenant which God commanded to youward.'"

If circumcision had saving power, then how account for the circumcision of the Ishmaelites and Edomites, and many other nations of whom Keturah, Abraham's second wife, was the mother?

If circumcision had saving power then Abraham must first have been saved by faith as the Scriptures say, then have fallen away and been re-saved by circumcision. If this be the case, then why is he known as the Father of Faith? Should he not rather have been known as the Father of circumcision? Truly this idea of putting baptism in the place of circumcision as a door into heaven, must also have come from Africa, where as Tertullian says, he thinks that Baptismal Regeneration came from.

"The New Is In The Old Contained."

The Old Is By The New Explained."

Whereas we do not build doctrine on types, yet the knowledge gained in a study of the Old Testament aids you much in the right approach and understanding of the New. From our observations so far we approach the New Testament era with a clear and definite knowledge that adults were saved without baptism, and that infants were provided for by the Lord without baptism, or believe that every infant was lost under Old Testament dispensation. This is clearly unscriptural, for David declared by God to be a saved man, anticipating his death, and speaking of his little child who had just died, says: "I shall go to him, but he will not return to me." The conclusion is inescapable: Adults

and infants were both saved without baptism, and that for a period of 4000 years. Only one logical conclusion remains: If faith in Christ could save before baptism was instituted, then faith in Christ can save now without baptism. This does not mean that baptism is not important for this age, but any other conclusion robs Christ of His Deity, by making Him impotent, in as much as He needs the assistance of baptism in order to save men.

During the entire Old Testament period God had taught men by setting forth Christ in type, figure, symbol, in prophetic utterance and open discourse. These types were numerous and varied. According to Hebrews these types and figures were but, "copies of the things in the heavens." That is, Christ the reality was still in heaven, and these types were but copies of Him, but were not the Christ. Not one of these types had saving power.

Speaking of His demise Jesus says: "These are the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled which were written in the law of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalms, concerning me". Note then whether we turn to the Historical, the Prophetical, or to the Poetical section of the Old Testament we find that Jesus is the one they write about. He is the one theme of the Scriptures.

What The Old Testament Teaches As

To The Saving Power Of

Types And Figures.

1. Abel's lamb did not save.
2. Noah's sacrifice did not save.
3. The Ark did not save.
4. The Passover lamb did not save.
5. The Brazen Serpent did not save.
6. The Scape-Goat did not save.
7. The Altar did not save.
8. The Laver did not save.

9. The Candelsticks did not save.
10. The Shewbread did not save.
11. The Ark did not save.
12. The Vell did not save.
13. The Tabernacle did not save.
14. The Beards did not save.
15. The Silver Sockets did not save.
16. The High Priest did not save.
17. The Miter did not save.
18. Aaron's Rod did not save.
19. The Burnt-Offering did not save.
20. The Meal-Offering did not save.
21. The Peace-Offering did not save.
22. The Sin-Offering did not save.
23. The Trespass-Offering did not save.
24. The Temple did not save.

No dear friends, Christ alone saves. He is the reality of which these figures were but shadows. He was with Adam in the garden,—with Abel in his sacrifice. He walked with Enoch, and kept Noah in the Ark. He appeared to Abraham by the oaks of Mamre, warned unfaithful Lot, and struggled with Jacob. He led Israel out of Egypt, spoke from Sinai's burning mount and dwelt in the Holy of Holies. It is Christ and not the figures that alone can save and keep.

In the light of the above evidence, is it not astounding, and that also in the blazing light of New Testament revelation, that when Jesus gave us a New Testament type of His wonderful salvation, that Rome should shut her eyes dead shut to 4000 years of evidence and immediately proceed to turn this new symbol, baptism, into a saviour? The book of Concord but restates the position of Rome when it says: "The power, work, profit and fruit and end of baptism is to save."

Lutheran Church Commits Sin

Of Jeroboam.

When the Lutheran church incorporated this teaching into her confessional books, she officially joined hands with Rome and Pagan Babylon

and committed over again the sin of Jereboam, who made the golden calves and set them up for worship at Bethel and Dan, thus keeping hidden from his trusting adherents the true door and place of worship at Jerusalem. Millions there are today who refuse to worship God except through the Golden Calf of Jereboam, which is but another name for Baptismal Regeneration. Idolatry is not a thing of the past. Did not John, the aged apostle foresee what was coming when he exclaimed: "My little children, guard yourselves from idols."

Had not Rome's attention been called to this error? Oh yes, for centuries this has been done, but it has gone unheeded. She evidently finds this too indispensable to her system. Rome and her followers, because of the system of water and works on which they build, do not produce born again Christians; thus they must have a new door by which to get members into the church. If they should add only such as are truly born again, how many do you think they would

add? How long would this system last without this false door? The book of Revelation tells us of a certain church whom the Lord gave plenty of time for repentance, but she would not. All types of the Old Testament cried out to Rome and said: "We are not saviours." Still Rome made baptism a saviour. All types cried out to Rome and said: "We have no saving power." Still Rome and her followers say: "The power, work, profit and fruit and end of baptism is to save." Here we must choose whom we will believe.

Summary of Facts Gleaned from Our Study of The Old Testament: Men were saved by faith in Christ without baptism; infants were saved without baptism; men were saved without circumcision; Types, figures and symbols are not saviours. Types, figures and symbols all point to the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, our Saviour.

## CHAPTER TWO

### TESTIMONY FROM THE INTERMEDIATE STAGE BETWEEN THE OLD AND NEW TESTAMENT CONCERNING BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

#### John's Baptism And The Baptism Of Jesus.

The subject of baptism meets us at the very outset in the New Testament. Baptism is a very important matter in as much as it is a command of God, and must not be ignored. Standing right at the threshold of the New Testament dispensation we find two remarkable witnesses as to the source, purpose and design of baptism. Jesus tells us that John got his baptism from heaven, just where we would expect it to come from. Now that God had given a new symbol from heaven, should we not expect an interpretation of this symbol?

The basic teaching as to the meaning of the baptism of John, I shall leave to the schools of theology. My main purpose in the mention thereof is to show that the character of John and Jesus absolutely precludes the application of the regenerative power of baptism to them. If baptism regenerated, then here is where we ought to see some evidence thereof. Note then, that John was "Filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb"—a long time before he received his baptism. The point I want to make is this: If the first two great witnesses to baptism—and all that John baptized could also be included, for he baptized only such as repented—were not saved by it, then baptism as we first meet it in Scripture takes its place with all Old Testament types and figures as we have seen in our study.—A symbol only, not a Saviour. Remember, not a single one of the great church bodies dispute this but Rome and her followers, the Episcopal Church and the Lutheran Church. If the first two great witnesses to baptism did not

need it as a saving medium while they were laying the very foundation for the New Testament dispensation, why should anyone building on that foundation need it?

I am well aware that John's baptism is not considered real New Testament baptism, and as such should not be considered here. Let us beware, lest in seeking to make this baptism fit certain theories, we do not so explain it away, as to make of it all a meaningless show; and of the baptism of Jesus just a cheap vandyville act. Yes, let us be careful lest we place them as putting on a grand show that had no particular meaning. If the Son of God coming from heaven, and His special forerunner, John, sent to establish God's eternal plan of salvation, could act so lightly, then the Modernists are right when they call it all a huge mistake.

Although not wishing to build on it as an argument, nor dogmatically declare it as such, we would, before leaving this subject, like to submit our findings, and humbly place these alongside the findings of others, for your candid consideration.

It is a deep conviction with the writer that the baptism of John is full of meaning, and fits beautifully into this intermediate stage. Jesus says: "all things written through the PROPHETS shall be accomplished upon the Son of Man." John was one of these prophets. Again Jesus tells us what the prophets had written: "—all things that are written through the PROPHETS shall be accomplished unto the Son of Man.—He shall be delivered up—and they shall scourge and kill him: and on the third day he shall rise again." Thus John's minis-

try, including his baptism, could have but ONE main purpose,—the same purpose that all symbols had had for 4000 years, e.g. to set before us the great message concerning the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and our relation to it.

John baptized unto repentance, that is, "as far as" to repentance, or "to the extent of" repentance as the dic-tionaries have it. Jesus speaks of re-pentance as, "he that loseth his life." Under John's preaching, when people repented or died to self life, then John took them and baptized them, or buried them as the word implies. Now this was as far as John went be-cause he ministered under the old dis-pensation: 'The law as we know, "made nothing perfect", that is, did not bring out the full picture of sal-vation. They saw only in part. John's message was the same as that of all the prophets, that Jesus was to die for our sins, and that all men should now die to their old self, in as much as God had from eternity reckoned our old man dead with Christ. This repentance towards God then is the FIRST STEP in our salvation,—the step they saw most clearly under the old dispensation. When, therefore, people repented or reckoned their old life dead, they must also be buried in the likeness of Christ, who slew our old man on the cross and buried him in the grave. Thus John simply dem-onstrated the meaning of this new symbol so far as the repentance part of salvation goes. He showed the meaning of baptism in its relation to our getting the righteousness of Christ, but only the first step thereof. Christ was to complete this matter. We have then the following simple facts concerning the baptism of John:

**ITS SOURCE:** John's baptism came from heaven, Mark 11:30.

**ITS DESIGN:** Matt. 3:11, "I in-deed baptize you in water unto re-pentance." As we have seen in our study so far this symbolizes the re-

pentance of dying-to-self part of sal-vation. Now Mark 1:4, "John came preaching the BAPTISM of repen-tance", and Luke 3:3, "and He came--preaching the BAPTISM of repen-tance", etc. gives us much added light. Both these writers tell us that John came preaching a BAPTISM, (Note the emphasis on baptism by placing it before repentance). This baptism John spoke of was "of re-pentance", i.e. a baptism or burial resulting from repentance,—occas-ioned by repentance. Since true re-pentance implies both death and bur-ial of the old self, we see how the Holy Spirit's word arrangement fully verifies our findings: When a person truly repents he gives up his old life unto death. Dead people must be bur-ied. Thus John preached about a bap-tism or burial which resulted from a repentance or dying to self. As a death necessitates a funeral, so true repentance necessitates a baptism or burial.

**ITS PURPOSE:** The purpose of John's baptism is seen in Luke 7:29-30: "And all the people when they heard, and the publicans, JUSTIFIED GOD, being baptized with the bap-tism of John. But the Pharisees and the lawyers rejected for themselves the counsel of God, being NOT bap-tized of him." God slew our old man on the cross and buried him with Christ. The question now becomes, had He dealt justly? The publicans said yes, for they knew they were sinners deserving of death. When they repented they acknowledged this, giving up their old life in death and burial. The self-righteous Pharisees and lawyers did not see their sins and consequently would not repent and accept baptism. When we repent and are baptized or buried in bap-tism, we justify God in having slain our old man and buried him with Christ.

**ITS MODE:** As we have seen, John's baptism did not effect repen-

ance, for John baptized only such as had previously repented. He baptized only "unto" or "as far as" to set forth the true meaning of repentance, symbolically, which we have seen to be death and burial. When Jesus came to be baptized He completed what John had begun relative to baptism, and thus together they set forth sym-bolically the three basic facts of the Gospel, the death, burial and resur-rection of Christ. Thus we see how the mode required to set forth death and burial must be immersion. The mode grows naturally out of the na-ture of salvation.

Jesus came now to be baptized, the purpose as stated was, "to fulfill all righteousness." He came to show the fulfillment then of something already begun, for this the word implies. Some say it was to fulfill the re-quirements of Mosaic law. This could not be in as much as there was no command in the Mosaic law concern-ing baptism. No, the purpose of Jesus' baptism was to complete the baptism of John as a typical ordinance and no man can make more than a typical ordinance out of the baptism of Jesus no matter how hard he tries. The old types sought to show us this as only types and figures can. Now a new typical ordinance had been introduc-ed from heaven, namely, baptism, and Jesus simply shows us how this ordinance points to more than His death and burial as John showed,—it also prefigures our union with Him in His resurrection, for only as our resurrected Saviour did He reveal to us the full righteousness of God in Himself. Thus John's baptism shows us our union with Christ in His death and burial the first step in sal-vation,—The first step in getting the righteousness of God in Christ. Christ's baptism shows us our union with Him in His resurrection, thus bringing to light the glory of our full righteousness in Christ.

Seen in this light, John's baptism

and the baptism of Jesus are not just a meaningless show, nor is there any-thing essentially new or mysterious about them. Like other symbols had done for thousands of years, they simply reveal more clearly than ever the blessed power of death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and our rela-tion to it. Thus both John and Jesus join hands with all the prophets who had gone before them in proclaim-ing the blessed Gospel of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, and the relation of this new symbol bap-tism, to this great salvation.

**Practical Application of John's Bap-tism and the Baptism of Jesus**

When a repentant sinner accepts Christ as his Saviour, God reckons to him all the blessed results of the sav-ing power of Jesus. The sinner in turn accepts this, or reckons this to be true of himself. Under the Holy Spirit's enlightenment this becomes a blessed experience which brings peace and a good conscience. The saved sin-ner in obedience to God's command gives God an answer in baptism as to how he got a good conscience. As he enters the baptismal waters to be buried, he confesses that he died with Christ and now is buried "with Him through baptism unto death"; and this is his assurance that his sins are really put away by Christ. Then as he arises from his baptismal grave he confesses to God and all the people, "that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in the newness of life." Thus he confesses to God and the people that because of his union with Christ by faith, he is now "a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."

If we know that our sins have so been put away, and know that we have been raised with Christ in His resurrection, then how willing we



should be to go God's way in baptism, that we might give a proper and complete testimony to God and the people as to how we were saved. Why all this argument about mode? Does not the mode grow out of the nature of salvation? Could there, in fact, be but one right mode? To the author, at least, though he does not wish to be taken in an unchristian spirit, sprinkling appears so basically inadequate. It fails so utterly to bring out the full picture of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ in the sight of men. How do you think it must appear in God's sight? When Jesus slew our old man on the cross, He also quickly put him away, then how about it when we reckon our vile old man dead with Christ? Do you think it will suffice to leave so vile a corpse lying around? We would hardly leave a corpse around with only a few handfuls of sand to cover him. Why should we not gladly and without argument seek to put away

our old man as much like the real putting away as possible. As one man told me just as I was writing this: "If I had not been taught otherwise as a child, I would never so much as have even thought that there was any other mode in baptism but immersion as I read the Scriptures for myself."

The question of baptism then, becomes a simple question of giving a true-to-fact testimony of the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus in our actions as well as with our words. Many are they who would rather die than give a false testimony to Jesus with their lips, yet when it comes to baptism they are quite unwilling to give the right testimony, though they know full well what to do. Should any sacrifice on our part even be considered, when we consider the sacrifice of Christ for us? May the Lord help us to give also a right testimony in baptism.

## CHAPTER THREE

### TESTIMONY FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT CONCERNING BAPTISMAL REGENERATION.

Does Jesus Teach Baptismal Regeneration in Matt. 28:19-20?

"Go ye, therefore, and make disciples of all nations," etc. The expression, "make disciples", had acquired a well-established meaning, a meaning put there by Jesus Himself from the beginning. It means here just what it had meant from the days of Adam on, that disciples were made through faith in the shed blood of Jesus. So Abel was saved. So Abraham, whose "faith was reckoned for righteousness." Isaiah, as quoted by Paul in Romans chapter ten shows us that salvation came by faith, through the word: "So belief cometh of hearing and hearing by the Word of Christ." Since it was Jesus, Himself who had put this meaning into these words, then what other meaning could He have had in mind here than that disciples were made by hearing and believing? Can an unprejudiced mind read any other meaning into "make disciples", than what Jesus had put there from the beginning?

Now specified qualifications for any office or privilege must of necessity exclude such as do not possess such qualifications. If the law says I must be twenty-one in order to vote, then it must be clear that a command to vote would not be applicable to an infant two weeks old, because he does not possess the necessary qualifications. So here according to Jesus' own testimony for 4000 years, qualifications for discipleship are,—ability to hear, believe, receive and be taught. That this definitely excluded infants must be evident to all.

Now if they who hold that Jesus teaches Baptismal Regeneration here really believe it, then why do they change the order when it comes to the Mission field? There they do not first baptize the children. No they

are surrounded by millions of poor heathen infants, yet not one will they baptize before they have taught them, and they come to a rational faith in Christ. Does this not clearly show what they really believe about this matter? This is a case where wrong intentions bear fruit in a right testimony.

History records the story of St. Xavier, who was canonized by the church of Rome for his remarkable work among the natives of East India. He had been taught that disciples could be made by baptizing them, and took the words very literally, just as all who really believe it ought to do. Unlike most pastors and missionaries who claim to believe this, he had the courage of his convictions, and showed his faith by his works. Instead of the slower and more laborious way of preaching and teaching, he started his work by alluring large companies, of Indians, and by some kind of a squirt, or huge sprinkler, dipped into a large basin of holy water, he scattered it over hundreds in a group in the name of the Trinity. When his allurements began to fail, he literally drove them together in large groups in order to baptize them. In this way he made about a million disciples in the space of a few years.

Yes, we may laugh at the bit too liberal-minded saint, I do insist, however, that he was far more consistent than pastors and missionaries today, who live among the teeming millions of unbaptized ones, and even though they claim to hold in their hand the key that would at once unlock heaven's door to them, yet they use it not. If they really believed that children were born again in baptism, should



they not like the noble saint, provide themselves with some kind of a device and see to it, that every child was baptized, and that without delay? Baptizing them would do them no harm in any manner at least, and if only one out of the millions would remain in his baptismal covenant, even then they should take the chance. Now if their magic formula has any power in it at all, surely it should work out successfully in one out of a thousand anyway! This is a sad case where their actions belie their words. They know, and well-know that there is something wrong here. Are they afraid that cleaning house will tear down the house?

The author has often wondered why the advocates of Baptismal Regeneration have chosen only ONE of the qualifications of discipleship in this passage? The command is to discipline all nations, baptizing them, and teaching them. Now why do they require only the one qualification, namely, baptizing them? Oh yes it must be evident that if teaching was also required, then the whole theory would fall to the ground, for little infants cannot be taught. It must be evident that Jesus did not have infants in mind at all, for the requirements here are the same as they had been for 4000 years. Disciples should be made through the hearing and believing of God's word,—then such should be baptized and taught. This definitely excludes infants.

Is Baptism Added to Faith as a Means of Salvation in Mark 16:16?

Commenting on the above passage the Book of Concord says, page 468: "—the power, work, profit and fruit and end of baptism is this—to save. For no one is baptized that he may become a prince, but, as the Word declares, that he be saved. But to be saved we know is nothing else than to be delivered from sin, death and

the devil, and to enter into the kingdom of Christ, and to live with Him forever."

Commenting on baptism the little book known as the "Explanation", a book used throughout the Confession instruction, says, question 341: Baptism, "works forgiveness of sins, delivers from death and the devil and gives everlasting salvation to all who believe what the words and promises of God declare." Note then, that it is not faith in Christ alone that works forgiveness of sins, etc., but baptism also works these things. Baptism must indeed be Deity personified when, as the book of Concord says: It delivers from sin, death and the devil, brings one into the kingdom and gives eternal life. Is it not a crime that cries to heaven for judgment, when baptism, as they say, has such power, and yet these same teachers let millions of heathen children go unbaptized? Can it be that this Black Magic just won't work on colored folks? Apparently it taxes the faith of the most ardent believers in Baptismal Regeneration a bit too much to start out down the street with a tin pail full of holy water in order to start a revival among the infants.

Some contend that people could be saved without baptism under the Old dispensation, but not under the New. The Holy Spirit answers any such contention in I Corinthians 1:14-17 and 4:15. Note, that Paul thanks God that he baptized none of the Corinthians but Crispus and Gaius: "For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel." In chapter 4:15, Paul makes it plain as the noon-day sun, that he was their spiritual father, and that he had begotten them through the Gospel. "Yet have ye not many fathers: For in Christ Jesus I begot you through the gospel." It is impossible for human language to make the issue clearer than this. Paul without the aid of Baptism

#### TESTIMONY FROM THE NEW TESTAMENT

had through the preaching of the Gospel made children of God among the Corinthians. If disciples could be made through baptism then who can understand the reasoning of Paul when he says: "For Christ sent me NOT to baptize." This would of necessity make him say: "Christ sent me NOT to make disciples." The folly of this must be self-evident.

To any candid mind open to conviction this should settle the question once for all whether baptism was added to faith as a means of salvation. When men are indisposed, however, even indisputable proof means nothing. Having taken Rome's position, from then on it becomes a matter of denominational pride and dignity to defend this position, even though to many it may be painfully evident that Mark 16:16 does not teach the saving power of baptism. A position once taken, either by a pastor or by a denomination, is not easy to step out from. We fear that some find it easier to sacrifice the truth rather than to sacrifice themselves. Some pastors are willing to sacrifice themselves for truth's sake, but their wives hold them back.

Kindly note, that though baptism is a necessary matter pertaining to salvation, nowhere is it spoken of baptism as of faith, that the absence of baptism will condemn a man. Faith and baptism do, therefore, not stand in the same relation to salvation, for lack of faith will condemn a man, but it is not said that lack of baptism will condemn. The Old Testament saints seen in Hebrew eleven,—all saved by faith, yet not one of them baptized, proves that lack of baptism will not condemn,—and proves it beyond dispute.

Does John 3:1-16 Teach Baptismal

Regeneration?

Many sincerely believe that the above passage teaches Baptismal Re-

generation, for does not Jesus distinctly say, "except one be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God." Indeed, if this passage stood alone, such a conclusion might be as logical as any other. No Scripture, however, is of private interpretation. The fact is though, that Jesus had just spoken as we have recorded in chapter one, verse twelve, saying, "—as many as RECEIVED HIM, to them gave he the right to become the children of God." If Jesus teaches in chapter one that men are saved by receiving Him in faith, does it seem reasonable and logical to believe that here in chapter three He suddenly changes the order that had prevailed since Adam? Suddenly reverses His own teaching in chapter one, and tells Nicodemus that now baptism would save him? No, if baptism had saving power, then Jesus who died to give Nicodemus life would certainly have baptized him at once so he could have Eternal Life.

Then again note that right in this same text Jesus says, the Son of Man must "be lifted up; that whosoever BELIEVETH may in Him have Eternal Life." Again, in verse sixteen He says, "whosoever BELIEVETH on Him should not perish but have Eternal Life." When you take away all the texts in this gospel that clearly teach that faith in Christ saves, then this passage, "born of water and the Spirit," remains like the dead stump of the idol Dagon, after it's contact with the Ark of God. Yes, a dead issue it surely is so far as teaching Baptismal Regeneration is concerned. It has been well said, that this passage has no more allusion to Baptismal Regeneration than to Mars or the French Revolution; and is the most fanciful exegesis to be found in all the Middle Ages. At least it created the most powerful tool known in the Middle Ages or any other age.

A tool absolutely indispensable to her:

"Upon whose forehead is written, mystery, Babylon the Great, Mother of the Harlots and the abominations of the Earth." Through this supposed door into the Kingdom, which is not a door, BUT A TRAP, is taken in hundreds of millions of poor helpless infants without so much as a thought, act or volition of their own. And this is all that most of those poor helpless victims ever learn to know about the new birth. They are lulled to sleep at the beginning, and kept asleep until death removes them. Surely this is the issue of issues,— "Ye must be born anew."

To accuse Jesus of teaching Baptismal Regeneration here is to shut our eyes dead shut to all that Jesus had done for 4000 years, and all He did after this time. Let us look for a moment at what Jesus teaches else-where:

John 1:12, "as many as received Him", etc., no baptism mentioned there.

John 3:14, "Whosoever believeth." No baptism mentioned there.

John 3:16, "Whosoever believeth on Him." No baptism mentioned there.

John 3:18, "Whosoever believeth on Him." No baptism mentioned there.

John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son." No baptism mentioned there.

John 5:24, "He that heareth and believeth." No baptism mentioned there.

1 John 5:1, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of god." No baptism there.

Hebr. 11:39, "These (O. T. Saints) all having had witness born to them, through their faith", not through baptism, not

through circumcision, but through Faith."

If Jesus meant Baptismal Regeneration in John 3:5, then He is giving an infant's pattern to a grown man, and does not even follow this pattern Himself in getting Nicodemus saved. If a wife were to sew a shirt for her husband, would she buy an infant's pattern, and then not even use that?

If Jesus meant baptism, why did He say that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever BELIEVETH on Him should have Eternal Life?" If baptism was to be the great saving instrument, should He not rather have extolled the virtues of baptism? Fanatical exegesis,—that is what it is,—to read regenerative power into baptism from John 3:5.

A good example of the fruit that comes from reading regeneration in baptism in John 3:1-16 is seen in the following story: After a sermon on the new birth the pastor, speaking in his native tongue, asked one of the listeners if he was born anew, (fodt paany). Very innocently the listener answered: Do you suppose it makes any difference whether one is "fodt paany" i.e. during the first quarter of the moon, or "pa na", the last quarter of the moon. (In Scandinavian these quoted expressions sound much the same).

Again we say, we shall leave it to the Schools to determine just what is meant by being "born of water and the Spirit", but that it does not refer to Baptismal Regeneration, of that we feel assured.

Without appealing particularly to it as evidence, but rather to provoke further and more careful study of this much disputed passage of Scripture, we wish to humbly submit the following explanation, which we believe is fully in line with the fundamentals of the faith once for all delivered to the Saints. Shall but mention a few foundation facts here.

Some think that "born of water and the Spirit" means Baptismal Regeneration, some refer to this birth as speaking of the natural birth and spiritual birth combined, while others think it refers to the spiritual birth, and that water is but a spiritual meaning for the Word of God.

That the Word of God is in mind here can hardly be doubted in as much as the Word so teaches in other parts of Scripture: Eph. 5:26: "—having cleansed it by the washing of water with the Word." James 1:18: "of His own will He brought us forth by the Word of truth." Right here our opponents ask, and rightly so, "If God means the Word why does He then use the term water?" We shall seek to face this question squarely, by showing that when Jesus used the term water here He was using Old Testament type language with which Nicodemus should have been familiar, and that this type language is but the good news concerning the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus through which Nicodemus must be saved. We shall summarize our evidence under three heads: The SUBJECT of the new birth. The AGENT of the new birth. The MEANS of the new birth.

The SUBJECT of the new birth: Nicodemus, a Pharisee and ruler of the Jews is the Man. (If infant regeneration is in mind, should not the subject rather have been an infant?) The word Pharisee tells us much. Nicodemus stands before us a finished product of a religious system of works, the history of which goes back to Babylon. What had this system done for Nicodemus? It had wrought a spiritual birth according to the flesh,—a Hagar birth,—for kindly note, the Hagar system bears spiritual children also. It had borne fruit in cultural religious polish for his unregenerate flesh; and that is all it will do for any man. Here is one man who escaped its snares, but think

of the millions who did not, and die not today.

The AGENT of the new birth Jesus tells Nicodemus in simple words that the new birth meant born or quickened from above, which means in simple language getting the life that comes from above, not the life that comes from religious culture. He does not attempt to explain the mystery of the new birth, but simply says that the Holy Spirit moves upon men even as the wind, and thus caused this life from above to be born in man: "The wind bloweth where it will—so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The MEANS of the new birth Nicodemus as he comes to Jesus is already met on ground with which he should be familiar as a teacher in Israel. A teacher should know his text book. So with Nicodemus he should have been familiar with the Old Testament. After having told Nicodemus that he needed a new birth, and explained that it was to be quickened with life from God, different from his birth after the flesh, and having told him that this was not his own work but a work of the Spirit of God, He proceeds to tell him of the MEANS of the new birth. For this purpose Jesus raised up three pictures of Himself with which Nicodemus should have been familiar, had he studied his Bible, but like other Pharisees he had no doubt been occupied with the Talmud and been misled.

The first picture Jesus shows him is in verse thirteen: "And no one hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended out of heaven, even the Son of Man, who is in heaven. The second picture is found in verse fourteen: "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up; that whosoever believeth may in Him have Eternal Life." The third picture is found in verse sixteen: "For God so loved the world, that he gave His

only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish but have Eternal Life." Here then, we have three well-known pictures of Him who came to suffer, die and be raised again for our salvation.

Let us consider these pictures in the order given. In answer to Nicodemus' question, "How can these things be", Jesus proceeds to give him some information, but first chides him for his poor scholarship. The reason why Nicodemus should have known what Jesus was talking about is this: "We", (the Trinity), "speak of that which we know, and bear witness of that which we have seen; and ye, (Nicodemus and Israel) receive not our witness. If I told you earthly things, (the testimony of the Trinity concerning the coming, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus), and ye believe not, how shall ye believe if I tell you heavenly things", (the mystery of the new birth as known in the mind of God). "And no man hath ascended into heaven, but He that came out of heaven." Jesus is that man. We can get to heaven only as we get the same life as He has,—one with Him in His death, burial and resurrection. In short, Jesus is simply telling him the story of the gospel. This is the gospel God planned from eternity. There is no other gospel. Note then, in as much as the Trinity has proclaimed this blessed gospel from Genesis on in type, figure, symbol, and open discourse, should not Nicodemus as a teacher in these things have understood it? Abraham did—so did Simeon and Anna. Here you see the curse of adding books supposed to be just as good as the Bible. Thus we see that in this first picture, Jesus simply preached the gospel concerning His death, burial and resurrection.

The second picture presents the same message and was the best known symbol of His coming to suffer and die for the sins of the world.

The brass spoke of judgment in thunderous tones to Nicodemus, and the serpent spoke of sin. The simple message was: See how God has judged your sin or your old life. As you look at the serpent, there you see what you are in natural life. You are not to polish it, but it is to be judged to death. This God has done in Christ, and you need but to look and live. To Nicodemus then, it spoke in clear tones telling him that instead of getting to heaven by polishing his flesh life, that life must be judged to death. This God had done. A look at the serpent brought not only healing but a new life, i.e. they were brought back as from the dead. What is this but the simple story of how our sins were judged in the body of Christ, put away in the grave, but thank God we were not left there, but quickened out of the grave to the new life with Him.

The third picture tells the same story. It was because God so loved the world that He sent His only begotten son, whom He judged to death for our sins,—that is the meaning of it all. The first picture then shows us God's man coming from heaven to die for our sins and be raised again. The second picture shows us how He came to be made a curse for our sins, that we might look to Him and be healed. The third picture tells us that the reason for all this is that "God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have Eternal Life." Sinner, can you see how it must please God when you come to Him and avail yourself of His great love. How it must grieve God when you neglect so great a salvation. Be encouraged, therefore, to come. Look and live.

All this is good and well, you say, but you have not told us what it means to be born of water and the Spirit. Friends, in the light of the Gospel God had preached through His

servants for 4000 years, what else could it mean but the gospel. We knew the answer lay in the Old Testament, because Jesus inferred that Nicodemus should have known it. We, therefore, took our Concordance and looked up all the places where the Spirit moving in creative power upon water brought forth life. In Genesis 1:1-2, we have the first picture. There we see the Spirit moving upon the dark waters and brings forth a new creation. When we remember that "the invisible things of Him since the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood through the things that are made, even His eternal power and God-head" then the relation of the story of creation to Christ is better understood. The purpose of creation's story is to prefigure Christ and His salvation.

Reading then: "In the beginning God created the heavens", etc. The Hebrew word for create is "Bara". According to Isaiah 45:18, this "Bara-creation" was made to be inhabited: "Created it NOT A WASTE, that formed it to be inhabited." Whether we read in Gen. 1:2, "was" waste and void, or as many scholars have it, "became" a waste and void, the meaning would be the same for the type. The type of Christ we have here is then: The original or "Bara-creation" of the earth became a waste and void, being kept under a water judgment, upon which the Spirit moved in creative power and brought forth a new creation. This is almost a perfect picture of Christ. God's only begotten Son from eternity, who came from heaven as the God-Man to come under judgment, ending in the grave, upon which the Holy Spirit moved and brought Him forth on the third day, our Eternal Life.

The second picture which shows us the meaning of water, is the Ark. "Noah... prepared an ark to the saving of his house." So God prepared salvation in Christ to the saving of

His household in Christ. Noah pitched the Ark. This is the Old Testament word for atonement, used sixty-five times. The Ark bore these judgments and carried Noah and his family through these judgments of God. When the judgments were over a wind passed over the waters. The Hebrew word for "wind" is "Pach", —the same word as is used in Gen. 1:2 for Spirit. The type we have then is: Noah prepared an Ark. This carried him and his household safely through the terrible judgments. After the judgments were over the Ark was, as it were, lifted out of the judgments and set upon the Mount. After the judgments were over they came forth and took possession of a cleansed earth through the virtue of the shed blood. So God in Christ prepared salvation. He bore us safely through the judgments of God which ended in the grave. Upon this the Holy Spirit moved and brought Him forth, and He was set upon Mount Zion. There He is with His own until the judgments are over in the earth, when He and His will come forth to take possession, all through the virtue of the shed blood of Christ.

Jesus, Himself compares His experience to that of Jonah in the belly of the whale. In all these and many more it is clear that water stands for judgment. Jesus was using just another Old Testament type of Himself in speaking to Nicodemus. In plain language He said: Nicodemus, you must get a new life if you shall get to heaven. I am that life. Instead of trying to polish up your old life in the flesh, you must look to me and see how your old life was judged as all the sacrificial lambs said. I am the one who came from heaven and was judged for your sins as all types and figures said. You must look to me, and see how I took you and your sin, not only into the grave, as they saw clearly also in the Old Dispensation, but you shall see how I took you out