

## IS WATER BAPTISM A WATERY GRAVE WITNESS?

I have just finished reading a pamphlet entitled "Baptism . . . "What Saith The Scriptures" written by an outstanding Bible teacher, the pastor of a large undenominational church. This man of God has apparently accepted with pleasure the title recently conferred upon him, "the archbishop of fundamentalism."

The "archbishop", on page 40 of his "Baptism" pamphlet, states that baptism has caused much strife in the Church. One need not be an inspired prophet to know that this strife is going on at the present time. In fact there seems to be unusual controversy at the present time, as to much, little or no water in God's present 'grace' program.

On page 6 of our brother's pamphlet he writes:

"I ask an equally careful comparison of my statements in the following pages with the unerring guide, The Word of Truth . . . Prove all things. Hold fast to that which is good."

This is certainly as fair a proposition as one might ask for. So we shall proceed to examine some of our brother's statements in the light of God's Word. In this way we can prove all things.

I have already printed five pamphlets on the subject of water baptism, but I am printing this message, believing that this examination will cause the thinking, unprejudiced readers, if not other Christians, to be Bereans (Acts 17:11) and not to believe that certain teaching may be sound doctrine because the teacher is considered an outstanding Fundamentalist.

In I Corinthians 1:10 Christians are instructed to have the same mind and to speak the same thing. The "archbishop" and I do have the same mind and speak the same thing concerning the eternal Deity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and every fundamental Christian doctrine that has to do with salvation, separation and service. As to evangelical Christianity we are agreed one hundred per cent. We are both "pre-tribulation" Premillenarians. We both believe that there is one and only one true Bible Church, during this present economy, the Body of Christ, into which only God can admit. We both believe that the very moment the sinner meets God at Calvary and receives Christ as his Saviour that very moment that believer is saved forever. We are both strong on eternal security, and salvation by grace, without religious works or any other kind of works. We believe that water baptism does not contribute one iota toward the believing sinner's salvation. Neither does it help in any way to get the believer into heaven or into the Church. Some mutual friend remarked recently, that so far as salvation and grace and the one Body and God's purpose in this age and the culmination of this age of grace are concerned, he did not know of any two men who were in more perfect agreement than the writer of the "Baptism" pamphlet and the writer of this message. It is regrettable that water baptism should disturb our fellowship.

Concerning water baptism, our brother is too wet for me; and I am too dry for him. In his other pamphlet, "Wrongly Dividing The Word of Truth," he calls his brethren, with my water baptism views, "hydrophobics." This causes me to somewhat question his sincerity in his statement on page 40 of his "Baptism" pamphlet:

"A brother who believes quite differently to me on baptism may have far more fervent love for the Lord Jesus than I. Together we can enjoy sweetest fellowship, while respecting each other's conscience as to a question that has provoked much strife in the Church."

This man of God and I confess that we desire to love the Lord Jesus Christ far more fervently than we do. Under all circumstances he and I want Christ to have first place in our

lives. We think QUITE DIFFERENTLY as to water baptism, and I challenge our brother to prove that we can enjoy sweetest fellowship, though we do think QUITE DIFFERENTLY on this strife-provoking question. I am willing to enjoy that sweet fellowship with him, without surrendering my conviction concerning water baptism. Its up to our brother. We are told in Ephesians 4:3 to 6 to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit with one baptism. Our brother has two baptisms. This causes disunity. He will not keep the unity with me on the basis of one baptism. He believes and teaches that God's baptism lets us into the Church of Christ. That is the Church I am interested in. I am a member of that Church by the Divine baptism. No water baptism is needed to get into that Church. I am one with Christ, and therefore His baptism on the cross (Luke 12:50) is my baptism. This is the one all-important baptism. Our brother has another baptism. He asks that one who is already a member of the true Bible Church submit to the second baptism, water baptism by a man, before he can become a member of the church of which he is pastor. I am not concerned about becoming a member of his church. He admits that water baptism, according to the Scriptures, was not required for membership in the local assembly, for he states positively that there is no such membership taught in the Bible, only membership in the One Body, into which only God can admit and God does admit, without water baptism. But our brother makes water baptism the basis of Christian fellowship, instead of, or in addition to, Divine baptism. He sees water in Colossians 2:12, Galatians 3:26 to 28, Romans 6:3 and 4. and Ephesians 4:5. I am positive there is not a drop of water in any of these Scriptures.

As we proceed with this examination you will learn that our brother eliminates, as unscriptural, every water baptism interpretation and teaching of every individual and denomination in Christendom that is not in agreement with his teaching and practice. The Bible says "whatsoever ye sow ye reap"; so I believe I can prove to any and every thinking, unprejudiced Christian, that our brother's water theory isn't any more Scriptural than are some of the others that he ridicules. I believe his theory is the least difficult of all to disprove. After many contradictions our brother thinks he has deduced from his arguments this conclusion

#### "THE WATERY GRAVE WITNESS"

"In baptism I own that in myself I have no hope. Death is my just portion. Christ's death is my death. It is right that I should be buried." "The old condition is at an end, and of this the watery grave is witness." (page 24).

When "the archbishop" was writing a series of articles in "Serving and Waiting," which he later printed in his pamphlet, "Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth," I heard that he remarked the book was written against my dispensationalism. So I wrote him, as he states on the last page of his "Wrongly Dividing," that I was neither a Bullingerite nor an "ultra dispensationalist" for I have never agreed with, or in any way endorsed, the extreme dispensationalism of Dr. E. W. Bullinger or his followers. The "archbishop" never replied to my letter, but printed this reply in his pamphlet: "I speak as unto wise men . . . Judge ye what I say." Then he added that this referred to the letter that one such had written him.

I say that the teaching that the meaning of water baptism is a WATERY GRAVE WITNESS is fantastic, absurd and unscriptural.

In his own language, "judge ye what I say." I can only hope that some of the Christians to whom I speak will be wise enough to be like those noble Bereans and search the Scriptures to see whether these things are so. Do not be afraid of controversy, for controversy often provokes honest Bible study. I sincerely trust I am speaking to wise men and to unprejudiced judges.

First I shall quote a few statements from the Bible and then I shall quote from our brother's "Baptism" and other pamphlets and shall ask you and other interested readers to judge and render a verdict, as I make the charge that our brother is in utter confusion as to what he thinks he believes and teaches concerning this "strife-causing" question.

## JOHN'S BAPTISM

In Acts 13:24 we are told that John the Baptist before Christ began His public ministry, preached "baptism of repentance" to all the people of Israel. How plain and definite is the statement of John the Baptist, in John 1:31, "that Christ should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water." Will you thoughtfully consider this? Baptism was not something new with Israel, for under the law they were given "divers baptisms." (The word in Hebrews 9:10 is "Baptisms"). John the Baptist announced the kingdom of heaven at hand; so also did Christ. (Matthew 3:2 and 4:17). So did the twelve (to Israel) (Matthew 10:5 to 8). In Ezekiel 36:24 to 35 God, by His holy prophet, told the many blessings that Israel would receive when the kingdom is established on earth in their midst. Among other things He said, "I will sprinkle clean water upon you." (verse 25). "I will cleanse you and put My Spirit within you."

Now hear the record concerning John's baptism:

"And he (John) came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Luke 3:3).

"John was in the deserts till the day of his showing unto Israel." (Luke 1:80).

"John answered, "I indeed baptize you with water." He (Christ) shall baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire" (Luke 3:16).

"It came to pass that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened; and the Holy Spirit descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon Him." (Luke 3:21 and 22.)

"But I (Jesus) have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened (pained) till it be accomplished." (Luke 12:50).

It is strange and significant that between this statement of Christ, in Luke 12:50, and His statement after He was raised from the dead, Acts 1:5, "John truly baptized with water, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence," there is no record that any one was baptized with water. This is explained by the words "from that time forth," in Matthew 16:21, and "from henceforth," in Luke 12:52. What orders did Christ give His twelve apostles with this change? "Tell no man that He was Jesus the Messiah." (Matthew 16:20). What was John's baptism for? "That Messiah might be made manifest to Israel." (John 1:31). Why should water baptism continue with the order of Matthew 16:20? Christ's order in Matthew 16:20 was rescinded by His prayer on the cross, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." (Luke 23:34). Then again the Twelve began to witness to Israel that Jesus was the Messiah. (Acts 2:36). Then baptism of repentance for Israel was in order. And Peter and the Eleven preached the same message in Acts 2:38 that John the Baptist preached in the third chapter of Luke. Carefully compare Luke 1:28 to 33 with Acts 2:28 to 33, and Luke 3:1 to 17 with Acts 2:38. The same "repentance"- "remission"- "baptism."

Before we refer to this, in detail, let us ask this question; which of the baptisms in the Gospel of Luke is the ONE BAPTISM of Ephesians 4:5?" Is it John's water baptism, that Christ might be manifest to Israel, "baptism of repentance for the remission of sins?" Is it "Holy Spirit" baptism or "fire" baptism by Christ upon and into those who had received John's water baptism? Or is it Christ's death baptism of Luke 12:50?

Now let us carefully note Acts 2:38 and Acts 2:10 and Acts 2:41 and Acts 2:45 and Acts 2:47:

“Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.”

“Phrygia, and Pamphylia, in Egypt, and in the parts of Libya about Cyrene, and strangers of Rome, Jews and proselytes.”

“Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls.

“And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need.”

“Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved.”

The writer of “Baptism . . . What Saith The Scripture” is agreed with all other “grace” Premillennial Bible teachers that Acts 2:38 is not God’s order for Gentiles. Later on in this message we will read his statement concerning this. We know that Acts 2:38 must be radically revised to be in harmony with Ephesians 2:8 and 9 and Titus 3:5 to 8. A little further on I will quote our brother’s words that the apostle Paul’s sins were governmentally washed away by water. But here let us see the utter fallacy of teaching that water baptism is a door of entrance into the local assembly. The writer of “Baptism” and I are in full agreement that there is no Scriptural support for such teaching, for the Scriptures say nothing about joining churches. Note in Acts 2:10 that visitors from all over Asia and even from Europe were visiting in Jerusalem. They certainly had no intention of joining the Jerusalem church. They were some of the three thousand who were baptized that day. Our brother is agreed with me that no Scripture teaches or implies that water baptism is a door of entrance into some local branch of the Body of Christ. This teaching is based upon sectarian tradition and is contrary to the teaching of the Word of God. Thus we eliminate as unscriptural one of the dozen interpretations of water baptism in confused Christendom; that water baptism is the door of entrance into some sectarian church organization.

As we turn to Acts 8:5 to 15 we read a very strange program, not practiced by our brother or any other “grace” preacher, whether he be Premillenarian or Postmillenarian. Philip in Samaria preached Christ, performed miracles, baptized many believing Samaritans. But these believing, baptized Samaritans had to wait several days for the arrival of Peter and John to put hands upon them before they received Holy Spirit baptism. We find very much the same order in Acts 19:2 to 6, where we have the last Bible record of the water-baptizing of any believer.

## CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

Three times, in his printed messages, the writer of “Baptism” wrote that “Christian baptism began with resurrection.” He wrote in his “Wrongly Dividing” (page 23), that there is no transitional period in the Book of Acts. If some Christian preacher would go into the church where our brother is pastor and tell his members that Christian baptism began with resurrection, and inasmuch as Acts 8:5 to Acts 15 and 19:2 to 6 were after resurrection, they should first be baptized with water, then have hands placed upon them to receive the Holy Spirit and then they should speak with tongues, our brother would brand the visiting preacher as a fanatical Pentecostalist and not permit him again in his pulpit. But he could not prove by the Word of God that the visiting brother was unscriptural, no not even “undispensational” if there is no transition

or dispensational change in the Book of Acts. Such an experience would cause our brother to change his mind concerning “no transition in the Book of Acts.”

Now remember in the second chapter of Acts Peter preached “repent and be baptized every one of you and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” “Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added three thousand souls.” “And the Lord added to the Church daily such as should be saved.” (Acts 2:41 and 47). “They sold their possessions and goods.” “As many as were possessors of lands or houses sold them; and laid down the price of them at the apostles’ feet.” (Acts 2:45 and Acts 4:34 and 35.) If our brother would insist on this surrender of houses and lots in his church, and instruct his people to bring the money to him, his members would go out one by one and the pastor would be left alone. He knows well that this whole program on the day of Pentecost was an Israelitish kingdom program, in fulfillment of the prophecies of Joel and David, concerning Israel’s last days; for Peter said this in very plain language. (Acts 2:16 to 20 and 2:27 to 33.) In his other writings our brother wrote at least twenty times that the Church and its grace program, as revealed to and through Paul, was a message and program concerning which Joel, David and all other prophets were both silent and ignorant. If Israel had been set aside with Matthew 23:38 and 39, no successor would have been chosen to succeed Judas and keep the number twelve.

But now this interesting question: “Which happened first, according to Acts 2:41 and Acts 2:47?” Were the Jews added to the Church before they were baptized with water or were they baptized with water before the Lord added them? The Disciples of Christ (sometimes called “Campbellites”) and the Lutherans, and most of the Pentecostalists, and many others say, water baptism was first and then the Lord added them to the Church. They quote Mark 16:14 to 18 (all but the Pentecostalists omitting verses 17 and 18) . . . “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and miracles and wonderful signs shall follow believers.” The writer of “Baptism . . . What Saith The Scripture” has fixed this up to fit into his water baptism theory and makes it read, “he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized to witness that he has been baptized into Christ’s death; and no signs shall follow except once in a great while.” I do thank God that I do not have to wrest the Scriptures to support what I believe and teach concerning the one baptism for the members of the Body of Christ in this present age and dispensation of grace. (Ephesians 4:5 . . . Ephesians 3:1 to 4.)

The writer of “Baptism . . . What Saith The Scripture” and I are fully agreed that water baptism, in no manner, helps the believing sinner to be saved; that in the matter of salvation there is positively no merit or efficacy in the water ceremony. In all of his writings our brother has stated, in no uncertain language, that water baptism is not essential for salvation, or to get into the true Bible Church of this grace dispensation, or to get into heaven. He knows, what all Christians should know, that if there were any saving value in water baptism, Paul was not led by the risen Lord or the Holy Spirit to write Ephesians 2:8 and 9, Romans 4:3 and 4 and Titus 3:5 to 8.

But a great problem is presented when the statement is made that there has been no change in the meaning of water baptism since the Lord gave the message of Luke, the third chapter, to John the Baptist, or since the day of Pentecost when Peter used the Kingdom Keys. Our brother and many other Christians believe that this present age of grace began at the time Peter preached Acts 2:38 on the day of Pentecost. The message of Acts 2:38 certainly does not agree with the “grace” message of Paul. Surely the Lutherans and the Disciples and other denominations can prove their teaching to be just as Scriptural, with Mark 16:14 to 16 and Acts 2:38 and Acts 8:5 to 15 and Acts 19:2 to 6, as can the “grace” preachers who say that after the

believer is saved and becomes a member of the Body of Christ, by grace, he should be baptized as a witness to the world that his old man has been crucified with Christ, and that he has been buried with Christ by a Divine baptism. There is not one Scripture to support this religious water theory.

In another message, “A Heart to Heart Talk Concerning Water Baptism,” I remarked that every Christian, who believes in baptismal regeneration, also believes that the baptized saved Christian can lose his salvation, if he does not do good works. If a saved person could and should lose his salvation, then he would be unsaved, lost. If water baptism is a factor in the believer’s salvation, the person who has lost his salvation would have to believe and be baptized every time salvation is lost, by not doing sufficient good works. As I stated in that message, the only way to be sure that one is always saved, with such teaching, is to live in a submerged submarine.

### INFANT BAPTISM

Now, I call your attention to the “archbishop’s” statement concerning the Lutheran’s doctrine of infant baptism: (page 42 . . . Baptism).

“In the case of ‘christening,’ the sprinkling of an unconscious infant, where is there any act of obedience on its part, or on the part of those performing the ceremony? It is surely absolutely unscriptural and often demoralizing; and in its worst phase, when coupled with the soul-destroying dogma of baptismal regeneration.”

Surely our brother would not deny that there are many Lutherans in the Body of Christ, and therefore, fellow-members of his in the Body of Christ. And he believes that no infants need to believe or be baptized to be saved. Our brother and the Lutherans believe quite differently concerning this water baptism that has caused so much strife in the Church. Can our brother enjoy the sweetest fellowship with those who preach and practice what he terms “a soul-destroying dogma”? I do not believe that it is pleasing to the Lord when His servants, who know better, enjoy sweet fellowship with those who preach such a soul-destroying dogma, which is called by him “a meaningless rite borrowed from Rome.” Perhaps, our brother is true as to where the Lutherans borrowed their water baptism theory. But I think I can convince any unprejudiced Christian that our brother borrowed his water dogma from somebody and it cannot be found in the Bible.

I know that our brother has sweet fellowship with Presbyterians, which proves that he is hardly sincere when he so viciously denounces the “hydrophobics,” and refuses to have that sweet Christian fellowship with them. The teaching of the Presbyterians concerning water baptism is as far from the teaching of our brother as the north pole is from the south. The Presbyterians, some of whom are as spiritual as any members of the Body of Christ, teach that water baptism should be by sprinkling, that because several households were baptized by the apostles, and because sprinkling is the seal of the new testament and took the place of circumcision, the seal of the old testament, the little children of Christians should be sprinkled as infants. Thinking Presbyterians and our brother and I know that from the beginning of the ministry of John the Baptist until Cornelius was baptized (Acts 10:41 to 46) every male who was baptized had first been circumcised; that the Holy Spirit is the seal (Ephesians 1:13 and 14) and not water baptism. If what the Presbyterians teach is Scriptural, what our brother teaches is wholly unscriptural. If what the Presbyterians teach is Scriptural, then no little baby girls should be baptized, for baby girls were not circumcised. If what the Presbyterians teach is Scriptural, then only Christian Jews should be baptized and not Christian Gentiles, for Abraham was

declared righteous in uncircumcision that he might be the father of the uncircumcision. (Romans 4:7 to 11 and Galatians 3:8). The Bible asks how can two walk together unless they be agreed. If water baptism is the basis for Christian fellowship, how can Christians endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit on the grounds of one baptism, as they are instructed to do in Ephesians 4:1 to 7? Water baptism is a great divider. The “archbishop” believes that water baptism is to show a separation between saints and sinners; but the great separation is between saints and saints. He and I agree on every fundamental doctrine in the Bible, but there is a great gulf between us; in this case, a gulf near San Francisco, where he says he buried his old man. I do not believe that he did, or that he has any Scriptural right to say that he did. I wonder where his new man was while he took his old man under the water? Did he leave his new man on the shore? If he took the new man under the water, and he did if he took his old man under, he buried his new man alive.

But now you are to be the jury and the judge and judge what I say concerning his teaching on this water baptism that has caused so much strife in the church. Now read very carefully these statements copied from the archbishop’s books:

“Let the reader not fall into a mistake very commonly made today, the Kingdom is not the Church (Body).”

We, as Christians, do not want to fall into mistakes, so we will not call the Kingdom the Church; we will keep them separated.

#### THE CHURCH-THE KINGDOM-CHRISTIANITY

But now carefully note this statement on page 54 of our brother’s “Sailing With Paul”  
“BAPTISM IS THE INITIATORY ORDINANCE OF CHRISTIANITY.”

Our brother knows that the word “Christianity” is not found in the Bible: Water baptism, he says, is the ordinance that initiates us into Christianity. In my judgment a man cannot be initiated into Christianity by any ordinance; but when he becomes a member of the Body of Christ, wholly apart from any ordinance, he is in Christianity. Christianity is Romans 14:17. If he is in Christianity, he is in the Body of Christ.

And he is in the Kingdom of God’s dear Son (Colossians 1:13). All who are members of the Body of Christ are there by God’s own Divine baptism, without any ordinance of man. (I Corinthians 12:13). Yes, I Corinthians 12:13 is God’s way of being initiated into Christianity. On the same page of “Sailing With Paul” our brother has written . . . “Baptism has a wider scope than Christianity.”

This last statement is explained on page 5 of his “Baptism”:

“That it (water baptism) is not properly speaking, a Church ordinance, but a Kingdom ordinance, I also admit and teach, because unlike the Lord’s Supper, baptism had a place before the Church began, and will have one after it has been taken to heaven.”

You ask with me, “if the Church is not the Kingdom, and you and I are in the Church, without the Kingdom ordinance, why do we want a Kingdom ordinance after we get into the Church by God’s own baptism? All Christians should want to properly speak so we shall agree to our brother’s statement that water baptism is not a “church” ordinance.

Now I ask you to be true Bereans, not only searching the Scriptures to see whether these things be true; but I ask that, with as little prejudice as possible, you compare the statements of our brother that water baptism is not a Church ordinance, but is the initiatory ordinance of Christianity, with this statement copied from his “Baptism” book pages 4 and 5:

“The query as to whether baptism brings its subjects into the Kingdom of Heaven, or the House of God, or the Body of Christ, has not really been touched. Here I need to say that I do not believe that it brings one into any of the three.” “I presume that those known as Friends, or Quakers, with numbers of other Christians who recognize no ordinance (though they assuredly lose much joy by such neglect), are yet in the Kingdom, the House and the Body.”

Remember that our brother has stated that water baptism is a Kingdom ordinance, yet he admits that it does not bring one into the Kingdom. Saved Quakers and others, without water baptism, are in the Kingdom and in the Body. But if water baptism is the initiatory ordinance of Christianity, are they Christians, if they have not been initiated into Christianity by man’s water ceremony? Our brother has stated many times, in his writings, that water baptism does not even help to save any one, that water baptism in no way helps a man to get into the Body of Christ or into the local church, which may be a branch of the Body of Christ, for he states that believers are saved by grace through faith in the redemptive work of Christ and are at the time of salvation baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ. Our brother has so clearly stated in his writings that “joining the church” is an unscriptural term; that only God can admit and receive members into the Church, which is Christ’s Body. Now by way of contrast note this statement of the same writer, copied from page 20 of his “Sailing With Paul:”

“A new order has been established which we generally call Christianity. To share in this we need the bath of regeneration. Born anew and made fit for the new order.”

Then we have two initiations into Christianity, the new birth, the bath of regeneration, and water baptism, the initiatory ordinance. But the new birth admits the person into the Body of Christ and the Kingdom; and also into Christianity, and water baptism initiates into Christianity; but water baptism does not bring one either into the Kingdom or the Church. If we were to accept such illogical and unscriptural reasoning, we would have to recognize a difference between Christianity and the Body, although the new birth admits the believer into both. Do you see that the “archbishop” is utterly confused and does not know what he believes?

You and I know that if there had been any value to water baptism in Paul’s grace message, which is our grace message for today, he would have remembered whether he baptized more than four or five people in that large city, where he led many to Christ (Acts 18:8). (1 Corinthians 1:14 to 17). And he never would have thanked God that he baptized very few. (1 Corinthians 1:14 to 17). Our brother has stated plainly in his writings that no member of the Body of Christ is told in the Scriptures to be baptized with water. He states that Christ instructed the twelve apostles to baptize; but that He sent Paul not to baptize.

Now to add to his utter confusion note these two statements concerning Peter’s keys of the Kingdom of Heaven (Matthew 16:18 and 19). From “the Mysteries of God,” page 34:

“Peter, then is to open the door into the Kingdom. It is not into heaven: nor even into the Church.” “On the day of Pentecost we find Peter using the keys and admitting the Jews. In the house of Cornelius he opens the door to the Gentiles.”

Into what did Peter admit the Jews on the day of Pentecost? The keys did not admit into the Church. Water Baptism did not bring them either into the Kingdom or into the Church. Our brother has said many times in his writings that the moment the Holy Spirit fell on the day of Pentecost the Body of Christ was formed and that it is not the part of man to receive his fellow-man into the Church for that was, and is, God’s work.

We read in Romans 14:17, “the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.” You and I have always believed that this is a good definition of Christianity. Therefore Christianity and the Kingdom of God, as described in

Romans 14:17, are one and the same. Certainly we long to see poor lost sinners initiated into the Kingdom of God, and our brother states that sinners, when born again, are in Christianity and in the Kingdom and in the Body of Christ. They are initiated into Christianity by the water baptism ordinance, but water baptism does not bring them into the Church or into the Kingdom. Water baptism is not a “Church” ordinance; it is a “Kingdom” ordinance. You and I are not desirous of getting any one into what our brother calls “Christendom” in his books; and if that is what Peter’s keys open, we prefer to be saved by Paul’s grace gospel and follow him and say “Christ sent me not to baptize but to preach the gospel.”

Now to add to this inexcusable confusion our brother has stated on page 39 of his “Baptism” book:

“Baptized every communicant should be; the order of Acts 2:41 and 42 is clear enough as to that.

“The order of Acts 2:41 and 42 follows immediately the order of Acts 2:38, “repent and be baptized every one of you, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” But every Christian knows that our brother does not follow this order either in his preaching or in receiving members into his present church, which they do enter by confession of their faith in Christ and water baptism. He admits that they can get into the Bible church without water baptism, but not into his church.

#### WAS PAUL’S BAPTISM CHRISTIAN BAPTISM?

But note what he states was the meaning of the water baptism which the apostle Paul, as Saul, received:

“As part of the nation (Israel) he must share its fate. As baptized out of it and unto Christian ground, his sins would be governmentally washed away?” (Baptism page 29.)

Here I am reminded of some statements our brother printed in his book, “The Mysteries of God,” on page 18:

“And preachers of Old Testament truths, which they offer in place of New Testament mysteries, would not find it so easy to go on confusing the people of God if there was real exercise of conscience among those who are content to be styled ‘the laity’, and who seldom read their Bible for themselves, and endeavor to rightly divide the Word of truth.”

Then on page 17 he has stated that, concerning the rapture of the Church : : : “NOT ONE CHRISTIAN IN TEN KNOWS ANYTHING OF.”

Undoubtedly the archbishop must believe this concerning water baptism, or he would not expect laymen to accept his interpretation or his confusion of interpretations.

Most preachers have little trouble leading the people of God into error. But according to I John 2:26 and 27, God will not forgive His people for following blind leaders into false doctrines or fantastic water baptism theories. Laymen, exercise your consciences; study your Bibles and give these water baptism theories the Berean test. Quit playing follow the leader, unless the Holy Spirit is your leader.

What does it mean to have sins washed away governmentally? Absolutely nothing, and our brother knows this. But Paul calls himself a pattern for believers. (I Timothy 1:15 and 16). Was his governmental washing our pattern baptism? Well, Paul is the Christian’s pattern. Our brother has stated several times in his books that in the twelfth chapter of Matthew, God broke with Israel, for there they committed the unpardonable sin and they were definitely and finally set aside with Christ’s pronouncement of Matthew 23:38 and 39, until after the fulness of the

Gentiles has come in. (Page 22—“The Mysteries of God.”) (Page 16—“Wrongly Dividing.”) He has stated most emphatically and dogmatically that the dispensation of the grace of God, to which Paul refers in Ephesians 3:1 to 4, began with the birth of the Church, the Body of Christ, the moment the Holy Spirit descended on the day of Pentecost. He teaches that the middle wall between Israel and the nations was removed at the time Christ died on the cross. Our brother is sure that Christian baptism began with resurrection, for this is stated several times in his books.

“CHRISTIAN BAPTISM is not that rite intended here by the water. Let us clear this point. 1st. Christian baptism was not instituted until after the Lord’s resurrection; and signified burial with Him unto death (Romans 6:4; Col. 2:12).”

So he is positive that John’s water baptism and Christian baptism are by no means the same. And in his “Baptism” book he has stated that Paul never preached to Gentiles what Peter preached in Acts 2:38 on the day of Pentecost, “be baptized for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” He also admits that Peter and the other Eleven apostles never received Christian baptism, but John’s water baptism many months before Christ broke down the middle wall of partition. (“Baptism”—page 17).

Now note his remarks on page 28 and 29 of his “Baptism” concerning baptism of repentance for the remission of sins for Israel.

“This power Peter was exercising when he offered remission of sins to all who submitted, upon repentance, to baptism. Quite in keeping with this it will be found that Gentiles are never told to be baptized for the remission of their sins.”

If what our brother has stated is true, then surely water baptism has one meaning for the Jews and an entirely different meaning for the Gentiles, and both of them are “Christian” baptism, for “Christian” baptism, he says, began with resurrection. And he states that when Christ died all distinction between Jews and Gentiles was abolished. If this is true, why should there be different meanings to water baptism, depending upon whether Jew or Gentile was baptized.

Paul was baptized after Christ’s resurrection and our brother is sure that Paul became a member of the Body of Christ when he was saved and baptized in the ninth chapter of Acts. (“Wrongly Dividing”). So “Christian” baptism is to have one’s sins washed away governmentally. This, he says, happened to Paul at the time he became a member of the Body.

To add to this confusion I have a letter from our brother stating that on the day of Pentecost the three thousand converts were born again before they were baptized with water; but they were not saved until after they received water baptism.

## THE GREAT COMMISSION

I have another letter from him in which he writes that for several years after the twelve apostles received from Christ the two commissions, Matthew 28: 19 and 29 and Mark 16:14 to 18, they did not obey Him because of their lack of faith and spiritual energy. In another message he teaches that if we were as faithful and as spiritual as those apostles, we could do some of the wonderful things they did.

Concerning Mark 16:16 to 18, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved and these signs shall follow them that believe,” our brother in “Wrongly Dividing” tells us that the signs were to follow the believing apostles, but that Christ did not say that signs would follow believers other than the apostles. Perhaps he has forgotten I Corinthians 12:28 and I Corinthians 12:8 to 11.

But now concerning Mark 16:14 to 16. our brother deliberately changes these words of the Lord to make them fit into what he thinks he believes and teaches concerning water baptism; but we have seen that he does not know what he believes. He has revised and abridged the Lord's commission to read, "he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized; and no signs except for those of the twelve apostles who were believers."

Here we learn how Christians get into a predicament worse than confusion or a severe shock to their religious pride, by trying to force the Word of God to agree with some unscriptural religious theory. And his water theory is fantastic and quite modern.

Our brother knows that he has to appeal to the unreliable history of the church fathers, who lived after the Bible apostles died, to prove that the twelve apostles went all over the world preaching the gospel of grace to Gentiles; for the Scriptures teach no such thing.

According to Peter, Christ chose his one mouth (of the twelve mouths) to preach to the household of Cornelius (Acts 15:7). After that Peter refused to even sit at the same table with Christian Gentiles. (Galatians 2:10 to 13). James, the head elder at Jerusalem, had much to do with this. Barnabas gave up Paul on account of this. Paul was the one apostle left to go to Gentiles. Other prophets joined him. But Peter and his associates agreed to go to the Jews. (Galatians 2:9.)

In Acts 8:1 and Acts 15:1 to 19 we find the twelve apostles in Jerusalem, and in all of the Book of Acts we have no record of one missionary journey to the Gentiles outside of the land of the Jews. When Peter did visit outside, he got into trouble. (Galatians 2:10 to 13.)

Note what our brother has said concerning water baptism for the remission of sins and the destruction of Israel's temple in Jerusalem:

"I should not judge that one could preach baptism for the remission of sins, save in a much more general sense, after the dispersion of the nation and the demolition of the temple (Matthew 24:2). It is never mentioned in any of the epistles. It was God's message for the time:"

The temple was not destroyed until after Paul died. And if water baptism for the remission of sins was practiced for all those years, and if "Christian" baptism began with resurrection, then baptism for the remission of sins was "Christian" baptism and was valid for all of the members of the Body of Christ even for some who became members of the Body of Christ after Paul died. What utter confusion! Our brother teaches that water baptism will be practiced after the Church goes to heaven. Will this be for the remission of sins or the watery grave witness?

### ONLY THE ARCHBISHOP IS RIGHT

If you will read our brother's "Baptism" book, his "Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth" and two pages each of his "Sailing With Paul," his "Romans" and his "Colossians," you will learn that, to his own satisfaction, he has proved that every interpretation given to water baptism by other Christian individuals and denominations is wrong and only he is right. He has eliminated every theory except his own.

He ridicules baptismal regeneration and infant baptism. He explains away the "household baptism" of his "fellow-Plymouth Brethren" by saying that Israel's baptism in the Red Sea was national baptism ("Baptism"—page 33). He does not believe that water baptism admits one into the Body of Christ or into the local assembly, or into the Kingdom, although it is a "Kingdom," not a "Church," ordinance, and the initiatory ordinance of Christianity. As remarked previously

it is difficult to see how a believer could be initiated by water into Christianity but not into either the Body of Christ or the Kingdom.

So, according to him, the Lutherans are wrong, the Presbyterians are wrong, the Disciples and Pentecostals are wrong. All of the teachers and preachers and members of the Reformed and Christian Reformed Churches are wrong. The Dunkards and Mennonites are wrong. Most of the Baptists are wrong. The “household baptism Plymouth Brethren” are wrong. The Quakers are wrong. Only those who agree with him are right, It is a very simple matter to prove to any intelligent, honest unprejudiced Christian that our brother is most assuredly wrong.

He says there is water in Galatians 3:27—in Ephesians 4:5—Romans 6:4 to 6—Colossians 2:12. If I am a “hydrophobic” he is troubled with “hydromania,” for he sees water where God never put it.

### THE WATERY GRAVE

But now as to his special interpretation of water baptism, his watery grave theory, let us read what our brother has written in several of his books. First we quote from his Lectures on Romans, page 76:

“So we who are saved are now baptized unto, or into the death of Christ. We have accepted His death as ours, knowing that He died in our place. We are baptized unto Him as the new Leader. Is this the Spirit’s baptism? I think not. The Spirit does not baptize unto death . . . Our baptism with water is a baptism unto Christ’s death.”

Now from his Lectures on Colossians, page 86:

“Christianity knows only one baptism, and that of course, is baptism unto the death of Jesus Christ. To speak of the Holy Spirit’s baptism as a burial with Christ unto death is nonsense.”

Now from his book, “Baptism . . . What Saith The Scriptures,” page 24:

“I died with Him (Christ) . . . So having died it is right that I should be buried. My old condition is at an end, and of this the WATERY GRAVE IS WITNESS.”

Our brother is right; Christianity, in the dispensation of the grace of God, knows only ONE BAPTISM. This is plainly taught in Ephesians 4:5. The brethren who teach the “watery grave witness” should get together and obey I Corinthians 1:10 by speaking the same thing. Dr. William L. Pettingill, who reads water into Romans 6:4, teaches that the Church is not working under the great commission of Matthew 28:19 and 20, and that there is no water in the one Divine baptism of Ephesians 4:5. The leading radio Bible teacher with the Moody Bible Institute teaches the “watery grave witness,” using Romans 6:4; whereas the best Bible expositor in the Institute, their leading Greek scholar, has stated dogmatically and emphatically in print that there is no water in Romans, the sixth chapter; that the Greek language of the chapter forbids the very thought of water. One of these two outstanding men, both in the same Institute, is leading the people into error; and I am sure it is the radio preacher or teacher. If there is any water in the baptism of the sixth chapter of Romans, it is meritorious and efficacious. The baptism in that chapter makes the believer a new creature and identifies him with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. If there is water in Romans 6:4, then water performs a miracle. This is true also of Galatians 3:27, Colossians 2:12 and Ephesians 4:5.

But back to the “archbishop’s” teaching, that Holy Spirit baptism is not a burial with Christ. He says, to teach this is nonsense. Let’s judge our brother by his own words, and show that he teaches nonsense. I now quote a paragraph from page 24 of his “Baptism” book:

“It is not of course that the unimmersed are not buried with Christ, if believers. All such have died with Him, been buried with Him, and raised with Him.”

Did you ever in all your life read such contradictions? In one statement our brother says to teach that baptism into death and burial with Christ is Divine is nonsense; it must be by water. In another statement, “the Spirit does not baptize unto death.” In another he acknowledges that all believers, who have received the Divine baptism, are dead with Christ, buried with Christ, and raised with Him. You see he does not know what he believes. Does he believe, or not believe, that the believer is baptized into the death of Christ, buried with Him by baptism and raised to walk in newness of life without water baptism?

Yes, as our brother states in several places, the believer’s old man was dealt with at Calvary. Christ spoke in plain language of His crucifixion as His baptism (Luke 12:50). If Christ’s death is reckoned unto the believer, so Christ’s death baptism is reckoned unto the believer. If, as our brother truthfully states, unimmersed believers are dead, buried and raised with Christ by the Divine baptism, why do they want a water baptism which John the Baptist declared was, that Christ might be made manifest to Israel? (John 1:31). The archbishop admits that believers without water are members of the Body of Christ, but they lose much joy. I cannot see any joy in his awful confusion. Note on page 12, of his “Baptism” book concerning John’s baptism and Christian baptism.

“John’s water baptism is quite different from Christian baptism.”

On page 14, he writes concerning the baptisms of Christ:

“The baptism of Jesus was not, however, as an example for us.”

On page 17:

“It is plain, then, that it is not merely as an example for us that Jesus was baptized. His baptism was altogether of a different nature from that which He instituted after His resurrection, and for quite a different purpose.”

On page 16:

“His (Christ’s) baptism in the Jordan is but a shadow of a far more solemn immersion (Luke 12:50) which He must yet undergo.”

On page 17:

“It is then the awful baptism of wrath upon the cross, which our Lord Jesus endured as our Substitute, of which, in its fullest sense, Christian baptism speaks.”

Once again our brother has blasted the pet statement of thousands of Christians, who cling to some kind of water baptism, because they say they are following Jesus in water baptism.

If Christ’s water baptism was a shadow of His death baptism on the cross, our brother may have the shadow in the right place. Why do members of the Body of Christ need the “shadow” baptism after they have the efficacious, saving baptism, the finished work of the Lord Christ, Who, by His death baptism, put our sins away? We are not saved by water baptism. Our sins are not governmentally washed away, as were the apostle Paul’s according to our brother’s speculation. Our sins are forever washed away by the blood of Christ. We are not brought into the Kingdom or into the Church by water baptism. No Christians today should receive water baptism for the remission of sins, as our brother states, neither should they be baptized that Christ might be made manifest to Israel. (John 1:31). We are not baptized for entrance into the local Church, our brother’s or any other. We are baptized into the death of Christ, buried with Him by baptism and raised to walk in newness of life, without a single drop of water; but by the one Divine baptism of Ephesians 4:5, Romans 6:3 and 4, and Colossians 2:12.

When the believing sinner meets God at Calvary, in Christ, he is baptized into Christ, into the death of Christ. He is made one with Christ forever and forever. He is then and there baptized into the Body of Christ. There is one Body and one baptism. (Ephesians 4:4 and 5). He then and there puts on Christ, being baptized into Christ. (Galatians 3:27).

On page 56 of his "Sailing With Paul" our brother suggests that after a person is baptized by God into Christ, he should show that he has put on Christ by being baptized with water. He likens this to the soldier, who dons his country's uniform after he enlists in its army. What foolishness! The soldier wears his uniform, every day, whereas water baptism lasts but a very few minutes, especially if the water is cold. The Christian does not remain under water to convince the world that he has on his baptism uniform. The uniform that remains with him is God's baptism and not man's. But this simply shows to what extremes a zealous immersionist will go to prove his point, and how poor, untaught Christians are deceived by those whom they regard as worthy leaders, instead of being true Bereans. (Acts 17:11).

If the believer dies with Christ and is raised with Christ and is joined to Christ and is seated in the heavenlies in Christ, the moment he is saved, does his burial come after his resurrection or before? Surely he is not raised until after he is buried by the work of the Holy Spirit. But according to our brother, this is nonsense. This is sound doctrine, not nonsense.

The nonsense is the term of our brother, "a witness by a watery grave." According to his own words, the twelve apostles did not receive this "Christian" baptism. Paul did not receive it; he was baptized out of Israel at the time his sins were governmentally washed away. Sins governmentally washed away and "a watery grave witness" of one's identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection are by no means the same.

Some people are baptized with water a few hours after they receive Christ's death baptism and Holy Spirit baptism. Some wait a few weeks or a few months. Others wait a few years. The old man should be embalmed, if his burial is postponed very long after his death. Is it not true that most Christians, who have been immersed, have not obeyed the third chapter of Colossians and the fourth chapter of Ephesians? They certainly have not put off the old man, and put on the new man, in complete obedience to the Lord's instructions in these two chapters. Is it not true that in these two chapters the believer is told how to really witness that he has died with Christ, has been buried with Christ, that he has been raised with Christ to walk in newness of life and to seek those things which are above? He witnesses by putting to death the deeds of the flesh. Colossians 3:1 to 6. In case a Christian waits quite a long time before receiving water baptism can he not daily put on the new man between the moment he is saved by grace and the time he is buried in water? Does the water baptism help him to put off the old man or prove to his neighbors that he has? One of our outstanding Fundamentalist leaders asked another such leader, a faithful servant of the Lord, past seventy, to be baptized in water. The faithful servant asked, "for what purpose"? The answer was, "as a witness to the world." The faithful servant replied with this question, "what have I been doing for forty-five years"? If water baptism is a witness to the world, the saint ought to be baptized with water every time he witnesses to the world. Generally the world does not witness the ceremony.

There is not the slightest hint in the Bible that water baptism is a "watery grave witness." Think of the folly of such teaching! When the saved man takes his old man under the water for his burial, he must necessarily take his new man down under at the same time; thus burying the new man alive.

By the simplest principle of Bible study, if Colossians 2:12 is water baptism, Colossians 2:11 is physical circumcision.

But now again the statement of our brother on page 24, of his book "Baptism":

"It is not, of course, that the unimmersed are not buried with Christ, if believers. All such have died with Him, been buried with Him and raised with Him."

Remember his plain contradiction, that the baptism into the death of Christ is a human baptism and to teach that the Holy Spirit's baptism buries the believer is nonsense.

## ONE BAPTISM

There are five baptisms in the Four Gospels, in addition to Israel's divers baptisms. (Hebrews 9:10.) There are equally as many in the Book of Acts. But the plain statement of Paul is, in Ephesians 4:5, "there is one baptism." Which one should a person really desire? I am sure that you and I, in our right spiritual minds, would select the death baptism of Christ on the cross, and find that the initiation into genuine Christianity, and find that thereby we would be brought into the Church, into the Kingdom of the Son of God's love, into union and communion with the Lord Jesus Christ, without man's religious water ceremony. This religious act of man generally does the very opposite of what our brother claims; it glorifies the flesh, and causes many Christians to be ungracious, if not carnal, in their dealings with those who disagree with their unscriptural theory concerning water baptism, a subject which has caused much strife in the Church. It keeps our brother from having sweet fellowship with some of us who offer him this fellowship.

I am not a "hydrophobic." I am a Berean. I am not "an unspiritual theorist," or an "ecclesiastical hobby-rider," or an "ultra-dispensationalist," or a "Bullingerite," or any of the other queer things our brother, in his "Wrongly Dividing the Word of Truth," calls fellow-members of the Body of Christ who do not accept his absurd, fantastic "watery grave witness" teaching. And I would refresh his mind as to his statement that Christians can disagree on this subject and enjoy the sweetest fellowship. If our brother means what he says, I'd like to have him prove it. I agree with our brother on every salvation doctrine in the Bible, both for the sinner's salvation by grace through faith in the eternal Son of God, and the highest plane of Christian living for the saved person by that same grace. I know that little or much water contributes absolutely nothing to either the sinner's salvation or the saint's behavior.