

SERMON VII
CHRIST'S MINISTERS HAVE THE
AUTHORITY AND RESPONSIBILITY TO
TEACH AND PRACTICE ONLY WHAT
CHRIST COMMANDED, WITH A PLEA FOR
CHURCH MEMBERS TO ACKNOWLEDGE
AND OBEY THE TRUTH, EVEN WHEN IT
CONTRADICTS RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY
PLUS
SEVEN PROMISES OF CHRIST TO MINISTERS
WHO FAITHFULLY PRACTICE HIS
ORDINANCES AND ELEVEN FINAL
APPLICATIONS OF THE SEVEN SERMONS

Matthew 28:19-20.

"Go ye, therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen".

I have already set before you the principal part of what I intended under the two first propositions in my text. What remains is to bring forward Christ's command to all his ministering servants to teach all nations, or those who should be disciplined among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

And then lastly His comforting and strengthening promise, which is, "And, lo, I with you always, even unto the end of the world."

A.

CHRIST'S MINISTERS HAVE THE AUTHORITY AND
RESPONSIBILITY TO TEACH AND PRACTICE ONLY WHAT HE
COMMANDED

To these propositions, your serious, Christian attention is requested. The first is Christ's command to the ministers of his gospel to teach all nations, or those who should be disciplined among them, to observe all things whatsoever he had commanded them.

Here you see the extensiveness of my orders received, and which I must carefully observe, would I be obedient unto the Heavenly Teacher, who came from God.

1. CHRIST DELETED THE CEREMONIAL LAW FROM THE NEW COVENANT

[Ed Note: In this paragraph, Merrill confuses Israel and the church. He was not aware of the clear dispensational distinction between these two divinely instituted entities.]

Christ Jesus, when personally on earth, gave a new edition of his own and his Father's mind and will. In this new edition, he abrogated or left out, many ceremonies of the old as being no longer useful. Under the old edition, the church was in its childhood, and therefore under such tutors and governors as were not needed in her riper years.

In this new edition, Christ hath pointed out what is to be preserved of the old. The sum of the moral law and the prophets, were to continue in force. These are, indeed, in the very nature of things, binding on accountable creatures.

But when Christ, the anointed and expected Messiah, was come, then all those rites, sacrifices and typical institutions of the ceremonial law, which were, together, as a school-master to lead the observer to Christ, were disannulled, being no longer of use.

You see what ministers have authority to teach for both doctrine and practice. It is what Christ hath commanded them, and nothing which is contrary from it.

2. DANIEL MERRILL'S FAITHFULNESS UP TO THIS POINT IN FULFILLING THE DIVINELY MANDATED RESPONSIBILITIES CHRIST GAVE HIM, WITH THE EXCEPTION OF BAPTISM DUE TO HIS IGNORANCE. HIS FIDELITY IN TEACHING THIS TRUTH UPON COMPREHENSION OF THIS DOCTRINE.

In time past I have taught you the precepts of Christ, somewhat largely. As I have taught them, so you have, as is believed, received them to the saving of your souls. The ordinance of the supper I have taught in is simplicity, and so have you received it. I have also been informed, that Jesus Christ appointed baptism, as an ordinance to be observed in his church. But what that ordinance was, and who were the subjects of it, you have not been particularly told, till of late. Nor had I, till a short time since, a clear understanding of either.

I, no doubt, ought to have known them before; but till I did, I could not teach them to you. When I came to the knowledge of them, it was no longer in my power to be faithful to Christ, and refuse to teach them. In the simplicity of my heart have I taught you what is baptism, and who are to be baptized.

Whether these things be, or be not, agreeable to my former notions of them, is nothing to the point. One thing I am settled in, I have, of late, taught them to you, as Christ hath commanded me.

Not only was it my duty to teach you these things, but I am commanded to teach you to observe them: For then are you Christ's disciples, when you do all things whatsoever he hath commanded you.

To observe these things, is like obedient children to receive instruction, and then to search the scriptures, that you may know how these things are. It belongs to me to teach you to observe these things till you understand them, and then to observe them in your practice.

B.

A PLEA TO HIS CONGREGATION TO RECEIVE AND PRACTICE THE TRUTH UPON EXAMINATION

Would you walk in all the statutes and ordinances of the Lord blameless, you must observe these things till you understand them.

You and I have been unreasonably prejudiced against light and truth in these matters. If I do not misjudge, the Lord hath, in answer to prayer, afforded me the needed light and knowledge upon the subject. It was not in a day, nor in a month, after my prejudices received a shock, and my mind partial conviction, that I obtained satisfaction.

1. THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO LEARN THE TRUTH ABOUT N. T. BAPTISM

Nor can I expect that you will, all of you, possess such a ready mind, as to give up your long, and almost inveterate prejudices, and receive the light at once. It is by little and little, that anti-christian errors must be destroyed from the church, and from your hearts, as well as from mine.

You may except to find me ready, at any time, and at all times, to afford you every instruction, and to answer any objection which may occur to your candid minds. You should have your Bible always nigh you, and possess continually a prayerful, teachable spirit. Be determined to hearken to none but Christ, and to be obedient to all his commands.

Be careful to avoid all bitterness and evil speaking. Wisdom will not swell with strife; nor will the wrath of man work the righteousness of God.

2. THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO OBSERVE AND PRACTICE N. T. BAPTISM AFTER ACCEPTING THIS TRUTH

It belongs to me to teach you to observe the ordinance of baptism, and the proper subjects, in your practice. You must understand these things before you can acceptably practice them. Some of you, no doubt, sufficiently understand them to proceed to practice.

But I have not thought it duty to hasten your practice, or to lead you by example, lest the minds of others should be injured. It is a time to weaken prejudices, and not to increase them. Wisdom dwells with prudence. Many of your minds, as well as mine, are, with pleasing expectation, looking forward to the time, when we may, with nighly or quite all our brethren with us, keep the ordinances of the gospel, as Christ hath commanded us.

When you shall understand these things, happy will you be if you practice them; for all gospel obedience gives pleasure in the practice. As Moses had much to do in Egypt, before God said unto him, "Speak unto the people that they go forward," so, my brethren, I may have much to do before things shall be in readiness, and before the Lord shall bid me speak, saying unto you, go forward. But, if the Lord will, I would live to see that day.

After Israel went forward, and were baptized under Moses in the cloud, and in the sea, they had a tedious wilderness to pass; so it may be with us. But, should we observe the pillar of cloud and of fire, we shall come to the promised land; and it may be, with much safety and speed should we hearken to the good counsel of Joshua.

3. THE CONGREGATION'S RESPONSIBILITY TO BE OBEDIENT TO CHRIST'S DIVINE AUTHORITY WHEN HUMAN RELIGIOUS AUTHORITY CONTRADICTS CHRIST.

You know, my brethren, as it is my duty to teach you to observe all things whatsoever Christ hath commanded me, so it is your duty to receive instruction, and be obedient. Your obedience is not to be rendered to me, but to Jesus Christ, and to the word of his testimony.

It will doubtless occur to your minds, Whom shall we hear? One minister teaches us one thing, and another teaches differently. You are to hear no man any father than he shall teach you as the man Christ Jesus hath commanded him.

Ministers have no authority, any farther than they receive it from him. He hath given them no power to teach, but what he hath commanded. When they transcribe out of the old into the new edition of God's word and will, and tell us that the rite and covenant of circumcision are to explain to us the observance of a New-Testament ordinance, we are not obliged to believe them, unless they point us to the place where Christ hath so commanded.

You are to obey them who have the rule over you. But even Paul was not to be followed any farther than he followed Christ. So it ought to be with you, in hearkening to what your teachers say.

Ministers are but men, and they have proved themselves to be so, by changing the ordinance of baptism into quite a different thing, and by administering their new rite to subjects to whom Jesus Christ never commanded it.

It surely is a surprising thing, and not to be accounted for, but from the relics of human depravity, that so many good men should, unknowingly, do and teach things which are quite aside from what Christ hath commanded them.

It is too late for you, my hearers, to cloak yourselves under what great and good men have said; for the truth of the Lord hath already been told you. Had I not come and spoken to you this word of Christ, you would not have had sin; but now have you no cloak for disobedience.

C.

CHRIST'S PROMISE OF HIS PERSONAL PRESENCE TO MINISTERS AS THEY TEACH AND PRACTICE THE N. T. ORDINANCES

1. CHRIST'S PRESENCE WHILE HE WAS ON EARTH

We now come to consider Christ's comforting and strengthening promise to his ministering servants: which is, "And, lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world." Christ Jesus hath been with his ministers; and he will be in preparing them for their office.

He was personally with his first gospel heralds, for the space of three years, or more; after this he left them for a short time; in this short interval they passed a severe trial. He was with them again, at times, for forty days.

2. CHRIST'S PRESENCE DURING THE APOSTOLIC AGE

Soon after this he sent his Spirit upon them, and filled them with it to a remarkable degree. Then they were prepared for their office. They speedily filled it remarkably, and the effect was wonderful. Three thousand were converted in a day.

3. CHRIST'S PRESENCE TODAY: HIS PROMISES

a. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS TO PREPARE THEM FOR SERVICE

Christ is as really, though not so apparently, with all his gospel messengers, in preparing them to go forth into his harvest. Those, who have not Christ with them, to prepare them for their office, are but as wolves in sheep's clothing, when they go forth into the ministry. They preach for *filthy lucre*, and frequently have their *reward*. It is too often the case, that those, whom Christ hath prepared, are obliged to go into the field, or make tents for their support, whilst such as run, not being sent, swim in luxury.

b. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS THAT HE WILL BRING ALL DIVINE THINGS TO THEIR REMEMBRANCE

Jesus Christ will be with his ministers in bringing divine things to their remembrance. It is the Lord's Spirit which causeth divine truth to occur to the minds of his servants. Truths, which have been forgotten for months, and it may be for years, or passages which before were understood, may be, and not unfrequently are, fresh and plain in the minds of his servants, for their comfort, and for the comfort and instruction of others, or for the comfort and edification of both.

c. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS THAT HE WILL GIVE THEM WISDOM, FORTITUDE AND FAITHFULNESS

Christ will be with his ministers in affording them wisdom, fortitude, and faithfulness. The entrance of his word giveth light. He maketh light their paths, and ordereth all their steps. He maketh their feet like hinds' feet, and causeth them to be swifter than the eagle, stronger than lions, wise as serpents, and harmless as doves, With what wisdom did Stephen speak! With what fortitude did Peter, Paul, and a thousand others, address their auditories! With what wisdom hath he made his servants to speak! With what fortitude to bear, with what faithfulness to endure, for his name's sake!

How remarkably hath it been thus, in times of persecution! And when will you find a time, when they that are born after the flesh do not persecute those who are born after the Spirit!

How often is it the case, when ministers, like Paul, wax bold, and testify that Jesus is the Christ, and what are his words and institutions, that they are persecuted, openly or more secretly!

d. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS THAT HE WILL SUPPORT THEM WHEN THEY SUFFER FOR HIS SAKE

Christ is and will be with his ministering servants whilst they are reproached and suffering for his name and truth's sake.

He says to them all, "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you." When Christ's ministers are reviled and suffer for his sake, his truth and Spirit bear their spirits up. He gives them to believe and know, that though they weep now, they shall soon rejoice; that their light afflictions, which are but for a moment, are preparing them for, and working out for them, a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.

e. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS OF ASSURANCE OF VICTORY OVER HIS ENEMIES

Christ Jesus will be with his faithful ministers in giving them to see their desire upon his enemies his appears to be particularly implied in my text. They are commanded to go and disciple all nations. Their desire is to see disciples multiplied. They go forth, Christ goes forth with them. Many of Christ's enemies submit to his yoke, which is easy, and to his burden, which is light. In this are they gratified, and their desire on them is accomplished.

f. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS IN ASSISTING THEM TO DEFEND AND EXPLAIN THE GOSPEL

Christ is with his ministers in explaining and defending his truth. How did Peter, Paul, and others, in the first ages of Christianity, explain and vindicate the truth, to the confounding of both Jews and Gentiles! Whenever, in ages since, he hath spoken the word, great hath been the company, or force, of those who have published, explained and defended it. Martin Luther, John Calvin, and a number more in the reformation, were like flames of fire: nothing could stop them from publishing, explaining and defending the truths of the Savior, for he was with them.

CHRIST'S PROMISED ASSISTANCE TO HIS MINISTERS DOES NOT INCLUDE THE SUPPORT OF ERROR

You will ask, how is it that Christ is with his ministers, when they contradict one the other, and themselves too? [Answer] It is not said, that Christ is with his ministers in explaining and

defending error. Error is human: truth is divine. When ministers undertake to support error, they go without Christ's blessing and presence in this their labor.

Hence it is that they are so contradictory and inconsistent; and are obliged to wrest the scriptures from their plain and easy sense, to support a beloved prejudice. But when they take up for truth, plain scripture supports them, and they have plain and pleasant work, and their subjects supported with ease, as you have seen whilst attending to the several truths in my text.

GOOD MEN, SOMETIMES DECEIVED, MAY INCORRECTLY MIX TRUTH AND ERROR

Besides, it may be the case, that some very good men may mix truth and error, the commands of God and their own traditions, together; and, whilst practicing accordingly, they may enjoy a comfortable frame of mind, and hence conclude that their beloved compound is all from heaven.

This may be illustrated by the following example. Mr. S. finds it to be a truth that his infant offspring, as well as every thing else, should be devoutly given to God. He hath received and holds a tradition from the fathers, that his infants should be baptized. He publicly gives them to the Lord, and solemnly promises to instruct them in the way of truth and duty.

He, at the same time hath the ordinance administered to them, or administers it himself. During the whole transaction he possesses much comfort in his mind. His consequence is, the whole matter is according to truth, just as God would have it. Is not this going a little too much by sense, and not quite enough by scripture? Does it not contain a *spice* of enthusiasm? Would not the good man have had the same mental satisfaction had he possessed the same spirituality, and yet had omitted that part which is enjoined by tradition only?

g. CHRIST'S PROMISE TO HIS MINISTERS INCLUDES HIS PRESENCE AS DIVINE COMFORTER IN TRIALS

Lastly, the great Captain of Salvation is with his ministers, to teach, lead and comfort them, in all their trials, in all their straits. Whosoever will leave them, he will not. Though he, the Great High Priest of our profession, when suffering for his people's sins, was left alone—all forsook him; yet, whenever his friends are afflicted, he kindly calls, saying, "Lo, I am with you."

This hath been the stay of good men in all ages, in all circumstances. Those who have wandered about in sheep skins and goat-skins, who have been afflicted, tormented, of whom the world was not worthy, have found their refuge here. There is nothing like this to support the feeble, distressed soul.

When godly ministers have been obliged to leave their people, yes, and their families, and sometimes their native country, for the truth's sake, this hath sustained them—Christ was with them.

President Edwards, for a noble attempt at partial reformation, was constrained to flee his beloved charge; but Christ was, no doubt, with him. Should I, for laying the axe at the root of the tree, be obliged to leave you, though, for the present I see no particular reason to apprehend such an event, yet I trust this will be my hiding place—Jesus, who will be with me.

D.

SOME PERTINENT APPLICATIONS BASED ON THE SEVEN SERMONS

From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, it appears that the two sides of the controversy between the Baptists and the Pedobaptists stand thus.

1. THE COMMON STANCE BY BOTH SIDES REGARDING THE DOCTRINES OF GRACE AND THE CONGREGATIONAL ORDER OF CHURCH POLITY

Before I state the two sides of the controversy, it is but reasonable that I define those whom it respects. By the Baptists, on one side, I mean the regular Calvinistic Baptists. By the Pedobaptists on the other, I know intend the Calvinistic Congregationalists among them. I give this definition that I may be clearly understood.

You see both sides are Calvinists, that is, they are agreed in what are styled the doctrines of grace. They are both of the congregational order, as it respects the government of the churches.

*[Ed Note: Daniel Merrill was what we might call today a "moderate" Calvinist. He definitely was **not** a hyper-calvinist. Like his close friend, Isaac Case, Merrill maintained a passionate evangelistic spirit all during his ministry, even in his pre-Baptist Congregational denominational years. From lengthy research (hundreds of pages!!) on Merrill's life, this editor unhesitatingly verifies Merrill's evangelistic zeal for souls.]

2. THE CLEAR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TWO SIDES

Now for the controversy—and it is this:

a. BAPTISTS ADHERE TO IMMERSION ONLY, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS ACCEPT SPRINKLING AS VALID BAPTISM.

The Baptists hold immersion only to be baptism. The Pedobaptists hold that sprinkling may be substituted for immersion, and may answer just as well.

The Baptists hold that the scriptures know nothing of a Christian ordinance of baptism for unbelievers and infidels. The Pedobaptists hold that, if a great man, who hath a thousand slaves, should become a disciple, then all his household are to be counted disciples, and are to be baptized.

b. BAPTISTS TEACH BELIEVERS BAPTISM ONLY AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP SOLELY FOR BELIEVING DISCIPLES, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS ACCEPT BELIEVERS AND UNBELIEVERS BOTH FOR BAPTISM AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP.

The Baptists hold that the church of the New-Testament is composed of visible or professed saints. The consistent Pedobaptists hold, that this great man, his thousand slaves, together with his wife and children, all belong to the gospel church, though he only be a believer in Christ.

c. BAPTISTS ADHERE TO SAINTS ONLY POLICY AT THE LORD'S TABLE, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS ACCEPT ALL TO THIS ORDINANCE IF THEY ARE PART OF A FAMILY COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIP.

The Baptists hold that none have a right to partake of the Lord's Supper but those who are his friends. The consistent Pedobaptists hold, that all the adults in this great man's household, if they be not guilty of gross immorality, have a right to come.

d. BAPTISTS CITE NEW TESTAMENT AUTHORITY FOR THEIR IMMERSION PRACTICE, WHILE PEDOBAPTISTS USE CONVENIENCE, TRADITION, AND THE ABOLISHED OLD TESTAMENT COVENANT OF CIRCUMCISION AS THEIR AUTHORIZATION.

The Baptists plead New-Testament authority for the defense of their principles and practice, where they differ from their brethren of the Pedobaptists. The Pedobaptists in support of their sentiments plead convenience, and the covenant and rite of circumcision, which were decaying, waxing old, and ready to vanish away, more than 1700 years ago.

The Baptists bring highly threescore texts of scripture, which are plainly and fully to their point in favor of immersion. The Pedobaptists mention three or four texts, which, at most, are but very doubtfully in their favor; and, when rightly understood, appear fully against them.

What advantage, my brethren, have the Pedobaptists over the Baptists? And with what crime or error, in this matter do they stand convicted?

3. INFANT BAPTISM AND PEDOBAPTISM [SPRINKLING] ARE NOT COMMANDED BY CHRIST.

It appears that gospel ministers have no authority to teach Christians, that their children and servants should be baptized, because Abraham's were circumcised. Christ hath no where commanded them to teach thus. **Christ hath no where commanded them to teach infant baptism at all, or baptism upon the faith of another;** much less, that they are to be baptized because Abraham's were circumcised.

4. GODLY PEDOBAPTISTS ARE INCONSISTENT IN THEIR PRACTICE OF THE ORDINANCES.

It appears, that many of the pious and learned clergy of New-England have made some noble and promising advances towards truth in this matter; yet in this they are inconsistent with themselves.

They will receive none to the communion, but such as profess faith in our Lord Jesus Christ, as well as repentance for sin; and they will administer baptism to the children of no other. Here, in two instances, they refuse to follow the law of circumcision.

One, in refusing to admit to the supper, impenitent, though civil, baptized persons. The other, in not admitting to baptism the children of all those who have been baptized. This is consistent with truth so far as it goes; but inconsistent with the notion that the subjects of baptism are to be determined from the subjects of circumcision.

These good men, so long as they possess their present light, must come over to the true Baptist ground, or submit to the imputation of inconsistency. I wish them to come over. For myself, I expect to, though my carnal nature hates the name of a Baptist as much as theirs does. But my better judgment tells me, that the Baptists are on the gospel ground.

5. GODLY PEDOBAPTISTS WHO ARE WILLING TO ACKNOWLEDGE THE TRUTH SHOULD CONSIDER BECOMING BAPTISTS.

It is a matter of lamentation that pious and learned ministers have not a little more self-denial; then they might be consistent with themselves, and with truth too. Could I be with them, and ask them this plain question, Do you not find a little backwardness from searching critically into the primitive meaning and practice of baptism? I fear they would answer with some reluctance.

To me, I confess, it appears an hard case, that the Baptists should suffer so much reproach, merely on account of their sentiments, when many of our best old divines have given them the ground, and confessed that their sentiments, as to the mode, are from heaven, and ours from convenience.

Our opposition to them, on account of the subjects, appears but little better, being but poorly supported by scripture: they having the plain word, and full current of all the prophets from Moses to Malachi, so far as they have spoken of the gospel church, together with the New-Testament in *their* favor; whilst for us, in this particular, nothing better can be alleged than the antiquated rite of circumcision.

If the Baptists be right, why not join them, and suffer small inconveniences? If wrong, why not prove them so?

It is pitiful that great and good men should be dallying with inconclusive arguments; when the time is long since come, that the *highway* of holiness should be so *plain*, that *wayfaring men*, though fools, should not err therein.

6. THE FAILURE TO ACKNOWLEDGE CHRIST'S AUTHORITY ON THIS MATTER IS THE REASON FOR DIVISION AMONG PEDOBAPTIST MINISTERS ON THIS ORDINANCE.

We see why good men have been so divided among themselves, as to infant baptism. The reason is they go without Christ in this matter. He is not divided.

Some baptize all. Others will baptize only the children in the households of communicants. Some baptize upon the half-way covenant. Some will baptize all who are under age. Again, others will baptize all under seven. Others still will baptize upon the good promises of godfathers and godmothers.

You will observe I use the word baptize in a sense which I believe to be improper, but I would not offend you with a word, when my meaning may be understood. But what propriety is there in all this inconsistency about the subjects of baptism? Does not the matter look as though there was no rule to go by, or as though none understood what it was?

7. THE MAJOR REASON WHY PEDOBAPTISTS WILL NOT ACKNOWLEDGE AND ACCEPT THE TRUTH IS PREJUDICE ON THEIR PART.

We see why good men, when writing or speaking of baptism, are left to speak untruths.

It is doubtless because they will follow their own prejudices, and not the truth. Error hath divided them, and Christ is not with them in what they say. Some good men, not many, dare assert, in opposition to the Baptists, that there is not a word about immersion for baptism, in all the Bible.

For *laymen* to say thus, is *presumption*, and for men of *learning* to make the assertion, is *almost unpardonable*. For they know, or ought to know, that the word to baptize, is not once mentioned in all the Bible but immersion is mentioned, unless they mean to play upon the word; and then it is a truth, when *baptizo* is mentioned immersion is, if they will give it its plain, literal English.

If the Baptists have the plain, literal and unequivocal sense of the scripture in their favor, is it not enough that they are despised and persecuted by the wicked of every class and not helped by any; but must we add to their affliction, by falsehood or equivocation? O prejudice! what wilt thou not do, even in a saint!

Besides, our good brethren, who are so warm against the Baptists, and will not allow them a word for their mode, do not agree together to inform us what the mode should be. One tells us, it is sprinkling, another says, pouring is the mode, a third contends for washing the face, a fourth is for putting water on the back of the neck, as the Swiss are said to do; whilst others affirm, that all these are right.

Now, suppose the Baptists are wrong, who shall we say are in the right, or is there no right in this business? Does not all this look just as it would were there an error at the bottom? Hath the great Teacher who came from God, left matters thus at loose ends? Does the Bible thus differ, whilst pointing out the mode? No. Its language is pure and determinate.

8. INFANT SPRINKLING IS NOT A GENUINE CHRISTIAN ORDINANCE. IT IS A DEVICE OF MEN BASED ON TRADITION.

It appears, that, in infant sprinkling for baptism, the intent of the institution is lost, and becomes no Christian ordinance at all. Both the thing itself and the subjects of it are changed. It is quite a different thing from what the Institutor hath appointed. Neither this mode nor these subjects are known in the institution, nor in any passage of the Bible, where baptism is mentioned.

This mode is of man's device, and the subjects of it have, at best, but a traditional right. For good men to do thus, whilst they think it consistent with the truth, appears to be a sin of ignorance; but if any do thus, while they know what the scriptures enjoin, their practice deserves a harder name.

9. IMMERSION IS THE ONLY SCRIPTURAL METHOD OF BAPTISM

It appears that dipping, immersion, or burying in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, is baptism. No man of real piety and solid learning ever doubted it. Whereas, sprinkling hath been doubted by many, denied continually by a large class of Christians, and been proved by none to have been ever appointed as the Christian ordinance of baptism.

10. CHRIST MADE NO EXEMPTIONS FOR PEDOBAPTISM

We see, that every plea which hath been made, for a general or partial neglect of the scripture mode of baptism, is an indirect though unintentional charge of negligence, or want of benevolence, or of foresight, in the Divine Institutor. Let every man of candor and common sense examine this matter.

Did not the Lord, who made our northern climes, know how cold they are?—Did he know them to be too cold for his disciples who might live in them, to be separated from the world by being visibly buried and raised again to join his kingdom?

Why then did he not mention an exception in our favor, and not leave us to suffer this inconvenience, or be in perpetual uncertainty and continual dispute, to defend our, at best, but doubtful practice? Did he not perfectly know all the *compelling necessities* which Cyprian and others would, in their erring judgments, find to break over the bounds of the baptismal institution?

Why then did he make no provision for these extreme cases? By doing this, he would have saved the Pedobaptists a world of anxiety, contention and censure. The fact appears to be, that our Lord intended, that the way of admission into his kingdom should be uniform, and that those who would not submit to it, should suffer the inconvenience of darkness, error and strife.

11. DANIEL MERRILL ADMITS HIS MISTAKE IN PUBLICLY OPPOSING BAPTISTS IN THE PAST FOR THEIR BIBLICAL STAND.

From what hath been said in the preceding discourses, is not the following a fair and undeniable conclusion? That I and other Pedobaptist ministers, so far as we have spoken a word against the Baptists, and especially that those, who have publicly warned their people to avoid the Baptists and flee from them, as from a dividing and dangerous heresy, have in this matter acted the part of the old Scribes, Pharisees, hypocrites—who would not go into the kingdom of God themselves, and those who were entering, they hindered.

I by no means suppose that all who have done thus, are indeed hypocrites, save in this particular. No reasonable doubt can be entertained, but many of them are learned, pious, and very useful men; men, whom the Lord hath greatly honoured as labourers, in gathering in the harvest of souls.

Many of these have been, in measure, bold, zealous and faithful, like Peter; yet when they dissemble or teach and practice contrary from the truth, they are to be blamed; yes, they are, in this instance, worthy to be rebuked.

It would, indeed, be very injudicious in me to contend that all which the Baptists have said and done is justifiable. It would be equally injudicious to justify myself, or my brethren, where we have both said and done things contrary from the church and name of Jesus of Nazareth. It is time for both ministers and people to look to this matter, lest the Lord send leanness into our souls.

12. IMMERSION IS A PICTURE OF THE BELIEVER'S FUTURE DEATH, BURIAL AND RESURRECTION.

From a review of the whole subject, the following inference appears natural, and at the same time worthy of much consideration. The divinely constituted method by which any of the fallen race are to enter the kingdom of heaven below, remarkably sets to our view the way by which we are to commence perfect members of the kingdom of heaven above. Our obedience to the former is a practical declaration of our faith in the latter.

In joining Christ's kingdom on earth, we professedly die unto sin, go down to the grave, are buried, and rise, as from the dead. To join the kingdom of glory, we must actually experience what is but shadowed forth in baptism. We must die, be buried, or return to the dust, and rise from the dead.

How exactly doth our entrance into the church militant shadow forth our hoped for entrance into the church triumphant! It also appears that Christ hath directed, that the subjects of the one should be professedly, what the subjects of the other shall be actually, all saints.

A CHURCH OBSERVING THE ORDINANCES AS CHRIST COMMANDED IS A BEAUTIFUL PICTURE OF THE HEAVENLY JERUSALEM

How beautiful doth the church appear so far as she observes the commands of her Lord, as to the members which she admits, and the manner of receiving them! She thus resembles Jerusalem, which is above, which is the mother of us all, if we be Christians. May the Lord direct our hearts into the love of the truth.

In the conclusion of the whole, it becomes us to add, to the truths delivered, what Christ Jesus added to my text: AMEN.

END OF THE SERMONS.