

PEOPLE'S PULPIT...



Sermon by
CHARLES T. RUSSELL
Pastor Brooklyn
Tabernacle.

THE COST OF CHURCH FEDERATION TO BAPTISTS, ADVENTISTS AND DISCIPLES.

"Say Ye Not, A Confederacy, to All Them to Whom This People Shall Say, A Confederacy; Neither Fear Ye Their Fear, Nor Be Afraid" (Isaiah viii, 12).

Sunday, Jan. 23.—Numerically Baptists, Adventists and Disciples represent more than one-third of the Protestants of the United States. What they must yield for Church Federation is therefore an important question. All three of these systems are built upon the Congregational platform, which recognizes as Scriptural the independence of each congregation as to its own creed in all matters of faith and Church order. These bodies of Christians, therefore, could not join the Federation as denominations. The only method by which they could give adherence would be either by abandoning their principles of independence for which they have so long contended, or else by remaining quiescent while their ministers through Councils and Conferences essay to act for them. And here it should be noted that the membership of these large Christian bodies have more and more during the past thirty-five years shown their willingness to have their ministers regulate their affairs, even though contrary to their avowed principles of Church Government.

But it is from the standpoint of doctrines rather than Church government that we shall examine our subject. As we progress we shall find that some of the doctrines once considered all-important can in the light of our day be laid aside as obsolete—as hindrances in every sense of the word. Caution, however, would suggest that for everything discarded as unscriptural the truthful substitute should be found—otherwise our progress would be toward the destruction, not only of the bad or our creeds of the past, but also of their good features.

Doctrinal Surrender of Baptists.
Baptists will find little to dispute with their co-religionists of the Federation along general doctrinal lines; their chief difficulty will be in the matter of what constitutes Christian baptism—the necessity of water immersion to admission to Church membership. For years this doctrine has been even more tenaciously held than is generally realized. Our Baptist brethren hold to justification by faith as a first or preliminary step which the sinner must take. But they equally hold that this is not the final step—that the step of sacrifice, the step of regeneration much follow in order to salvation. And a baptism in water they recognize as an indispensable outward indication of this regeneration. Hence it is standard Baptist doctrine, both North and South in all Baptist Churches with rare exceptions, that no unimmersed person should be esteemed a member of Christ's Church.

In a word, faith and reformation are steps of justification, but water immersion is the door into Christ. Only those who pass through this door are members of the Church of Christ from this viewpoint; hence, consistently, none others are invited to partake of the Eucharist—the Lord's Supper. The argument is that this Supper, symbolizing death with Christ, was offered only to the consecrated and accepted members of Christ's Church. Hence to invite others than those immersed in water would be a violation of the letter and the spirit of the Divine Word and a countenancing of false doctrine. The argument is that all of "the elect" will be guided of the Lord, so that their hearts and heads will become amenable to these teachings. Obedience thereto will be shown by submersion to water immersion—the door into the Church of Christ.

Like the rest of us, our Baptist friends have been in the past rather illogical in all matters religious and doctrinal; so much so that many of them have never realized the full meaning of their doctrine. The meaning was grasped in the long ago, but has generally been lost sight of within the last fifty years. It is this: Since water immersion is the evidence of obedience to Divine instruction and since all of "the elect" are not only instructed of God but obedient to him, therefore those not baptized in water are not of God's elect—are not members in his Church. And this in turn, according to Baptist doctrine, implies that all not immersed in water are outside of the Church—outside of the number of "the elect"—outside of God's favor—outside of the salvation provided in Christ—and therefore inside the damnation and eternal torment which Baptist doctrines imply have been foreordained for the eternal torture of all the non-elect.

Do our Baptist friends who see unimmersed Christians of other denominations in the walks of life from day to day really believe that the latter are on their way to an eternity of torture? Most assuredly they do not! But this is merely because they are illogical, like the rest of us. They are as illogical as their brethren of other denominations. They have outgrown at least this feature of the teachings of the "dark ages" handed down to them by well-meaning but less enlightened forefathers.

One glance at the matter will suffice to show our Baptist brethren that the very strongest features of their teaching needs some revision. However fundamental may be the doctrine of baptism, some of their conclusions re-

specting it will be greatly advantaged by a liberal pruning. But caution should be used. The Bible should be consulted. We offer the suggestion that too hasty a rejection of water immersion would be a mistake—that the proper course for our Baptist friends is to study the Scriptures afresh on this subject. What wonderful advantages are now at the command of all Bible students! They have marginal references by which one passage throws light upon another. They have also concordances, glossaries, indexes, and all manner of helps for Bible study. Our forefathers before the Reformation were generally illiterate. And even had they possessed education the pen-written Bibles were expensive and obtainable only in the Latin language. Indeed it is within only the last few years that Bibles have become cheap and plentiful and the masses able to read them.

What Must Adventists Concede?
The doctrine of the Second Advent of Christ is common to all denominations. And the Adventist belief that at that time the earth will be burned up is also a feature of all the various creeds. Many Adventists have abandoned the thought that the Savior's second appearing is at hand. And many more are abandoning the thought that when he appears Adventists alone will be saved and all the remainder of mankind will participate in the destruction and burning which shall then engulf the earth. It should not be difficult for them to realize that there is no great necessity for controversy along the lines of the time of Christ's coming, since they acknowledge themselves completely in the dark on that subject. Neither can we suppose that after thoughtful consideration they should feel justified in assuming that they alone are "the elect." Let us hope that with broadening sentiment they are more and more realizing that there are saints and sinners in their own number, as well as in all denominations and as well as in the world; and that "the Lord knoweth them that are his" and will care for them, regardless of denominational lines. But for that portion of Adventists which considers the keeping of the Seventh Day of the week the all-important part of Christianity we see no ground for Federation, unless, indeed, they may choose to get about the difficulty by counting the calendar the other way around the world. Thus they might bring their Seventh Day into harmony with what others term the First Day. Or, by counting the calendar in the opposite direction they may still keep their Seventh Day and realize that others are keeping the same day, though calling it the First Day.

Disciple Doctrines to Be Voided.
Undoubtedly Alexander Campbell was a good man with a great head. And undoubtedly many of a similar class following his lead are today known as Disciples or Christians. Undoubtedly these are following closely to apostolic customs in the matter of Church organization, which in many respects is beautiful in its simplicity. Doctrinally they claim most faithfully to stand by the Word of God alone. And one of their familiar declarations is, "When the Word of God speaketh we speak; when the Word of God is silent we are silent." But this beautiful simplicity of theory our Disciple friends have found difficult to work out in practice. Hence we find them as strongly entrenched behind unwritten creeds as are others behind elaborated creeds. These are inculcated through the writings of their standard authorities—including the editors of their leading journals. "Disciples" hold most tenaciously to the Bible teaching that baptism in water is indispensable to the remission of sins. This doctrine is supported by several Bible texts which declare, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins;" "Baptism unto repentance and remission of sins," etc.

Before pointing out their misapplications of these texts let us note the facts that according to their theory all others of mankind, Christians, Jews and heathen, who have not been immersed have not had their sins washed away. Consequently such are yet in their sins. Consequently such are lost. And lost according to the general understanding of Disciples and other Christians signifies shut out of heaven—shut out of Paradise—shut into hell and its eternal torment.

Do our Disciple friends act as though they believed this teaching? Do they spend all of their time and energy and money in seeking to bring fellow-Christians into water baptism for the remission of sins and escape from eternal torture? Assuredly they do not. Hence we are justified in supposing that like our Baptist friends they have not taken seriously and logically their own doctrines. Rather they have assented to them thoughtlessly. It would appear to us, therefore, that doctrinally our Disciple friends might easily be prevailed upon to abandon their peculiar tenet to the extent that it would not hinder them from losing their identity as advocates of "baptism for the remission of sins" and merging themselves or federating with others.

To assist them out of their difficulty we remind them that all the Scriptures they cite in support of immersion for the remission of sins belonged to the Jews, and none of it to Gentiles. The Jews were excoriated by John the Baptist and others to renounce sin, to return to harmony with Moses' Law, and to show this change of character by water immersion. But those Ephesians who believed in Christ and whom Apollos baptized for the remission of sins did not receive the holy Spirit. St. Paul explained to them that their baptism was an improper one—that they as Gentiles required an immersion into Christ (Acts xix, 1-7; Romans vi, 3).

Baptist Union Not Federation.
As a week ago we suggested to Presbyterians, Congregationalists and Methodists a union of heart and head as better than federation, so now we suggest to the denominations whose doctrines we are considering today. What we shall suggest respecting baptism will apply to all Christians.

All Christians agree that Jesus and his apostles taught baptism and that there are but "one Lord, one faith and one baptism" (Ephesians iv, 5). We cannot here elaborate, but merely suggest that nowhere in the Scriptures is infant baptism commanded or urged. The expression, "Believe and be baptized," implies a mental development capable of belief beyond that which infants possess. The original pretext for introducing infant baptism was set forth by St. Augustine, who urged that as all mankind were going to eternal torture except the Church, it was necessary to get infants into the Church; and baptism was set forth as the door-way. All parents, of course, were anxious that their children should be immersed into the Church and saved from eternal torture. And those good wishes were certainly commendable, even if unnecessary.

Subsequently immersion was declared to be unnecessary and sprinkling became its substitute with all. The thought of preservation from eternal torment thereafter attached to the sprinkling. Although our minds have broadened, so that comparatively few believe St. Augustine's presentation, nevertheless the custom of infant sprinkling continues with more or less of fear to abandon it for the child's sake.

Who will dispute that St. Paul's words of Romans vi, 3-5, are the clearest presentation of the import of baptism furnished us in the Bible! The passage is cited in proof of every theory of baptism, yet it supports only one—the true one. Notice that it does not say, as many suppose, So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into water. It does say, "So many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." Is there not a difference? That difference is the explanation of all of our difficulty on this subject. The clearing of it away furnishes the foundation for harmony between all; and not merely for harmony, but for union amongst all classes of consecrated Christians.

Consider the passage critically. First, immersion into Christ signifies to the justified believer his immersion into his Lurial into the Body of Christ as a member of "the Church which is his Body" (Ephesians i, 22, 23). The Apostle sets forth clearly a distinction between the Church and the world and between the salvation of the Church and the salvation of the world. The Church are "the elect" of the Lord, called and chosen; and if faithful, they will be members of the glorious Church beyond the veil. It, as the Bride of Christ, will be his companion and Queen during the Millennial reign of glory for the blessing of the world;—for the blessing of the non-elect, considered last Sunday.

St. Paul not only tells us of our need to be thus immersed into membership in the Body of Christ, but he proceeds to tell us how that membership can be brought about. The words, "Baptism into his death" explain the matter. How strange that we ever thought these words signified water immersion! Our eyes are now opened! Plainly, now, we see that "into his death" signifies our participation with our Lord Jesus in suffering for righteousness, in self-denial, self-sacrificing of the same character as those endured by the Master. It is true indeed that the whole world suffers pain, sorrow, disappointment, etc.; yet our Lord suffered differently from all others, and our dying must correspond to his. He suffered, the Just for the unjust. The holy, harmless, undefiled One laid down his life sacrificially, voluntarily, joyfully. And we to share in his death, to be "baptized into his death," must do the same.

True, Jesus was spotless, while we are members of the fallen race. But we are justified through faith in his blood. And hence we have in the Divine sight through him a standing of human perfection or justification. This standing is granted to us or imputed to us for the very purpose of permitting us to sacrifice our human rights and earthly interests as he sacrificed his. The "elect" are to be dead with him, that in the resurrection they may live with him and be like him and share his glory, honor and immortality. By consecration we present our bodies living sacrifices holy and acceptable to God, as the Apostle declares (Romans xii, 1). Thus we are "immersed into his death" and thus we become members of his Body.

Whoever fails to be thus immersed into Christ's death will fall of the membership in his Body—will fall to be of his elect Church, his Bride. The difference between being dead with Adam and being dead with Christ is very great. By nature we are all dead with Adam. He was a sinner, condemned. We as his offspring are the same. It was necessary therefore that

we should by faith be lifted out of this condition of death with Adam. In order that by consecration of all earthly interests we might become dead with Christ. Thus we share with him his sacrificial death and, by participation in "his resurrection," also become sharers of his Kingdom glory.

Ridding ourselves, then, of the unscriptural theory of an eternal torment awaiting the non-elect, may not all Christians perceive the reasonableness of the Divine proposition to bless them through the elect? As Jesus by his sacrifice was made Head of the Church, so all who will be his members must share his spirit of self-sacrifice—death to the world and earthly interest. Only such may share with him in his Millennial Kingdom work of blessing, uplifting, instructing, assisting all of the non-elect. Many of the non-elect under the fuller light and better opportunities of the Millennium will turn from sin to righteousness, from death to life eternal. This "baptism into death" with its blessed reward excludes no denominational lines. It includes in the Church of the elect those of every denomination and of no denomination who comply with its conditions of faith and obedience and consecration unto death.

Was not this our Lord's baptism as he described it? Just before his crucifixion he said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how I am straitened (troubled) until it be accomplished!" His baptism dated from his consecration at Jordan, but it was not fully "accomplished" until on the cross he cried, "It is finished"—his baptism into death was finished. Was not this baptism into death what he referred to when speaking to his disciples? James and John requested that they might sit on his right hand and left hand in the Kingdom. In reply Jesus said, "Are ye able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?" Surely he did not refer to a water immersion! Surely he did refer to his baptism into death, and meant his apostles to understand that only by sharing in his baptism into death could they hope to sit with him in his Throne (Mark x, 37).

With this reasonable, logical, Scriptural view of baptism before our minds which of us would be inclined to dispute over the form of the symbol or in respect to the class of persons who should properly use the symbol? Surely none would claim that infants could thus believe and thus consecrate to death! Surely all would agree that a symbolical immersion into water such as was practised by the early Church, according to all the records, would be the most reasonable, most beautiful, most appropriate method of symbolizing the real baptism into Christ—into his death. Let us, then, dear friends, not be content merely to federate! Let us unite our hearts and heads and hands as members of the Body of Christ; let us be baptized with his baptism, into his death!

MAY BE THE MEN WANTED HERE

One of Men Answers Description of Weeping Water Murderer

The two men who were arrested at Paul recently and given a jail sentence for carrying concealed weapons and wanted at Auburn for breaking open and stealing from the store of Klingler & Young, at Julian, are thought to be wanted elsewhere for graver crimes.

One of the men, George Nickerson was taken before Justice Goff this sentence on a petty charge to hold him some days longer.

It is thought that one of the men is one of the men who shot and killed the town marshal at Weeping Water last year, and the other is a man wanted for the killing of an officer at Los Angeles, Cal. They fit the descriptions sent out of these men and they will be held until some one coems to identify them.—Nebraska City News.

Mrs. John Reed Dies.

Word was received in the city this morning of the death at her home east of the river of Mrs. John Reed, well known in this city. The nature of the illness which carried her off is not known. Her husband familiarly known as "Jack" Reed has many good friends in this city who will extend their utmost sympathy to him in his distress.

Find Folk Much Better.

A. B. Tucker from near Nehawka, was in the city today attending to some business matters and while here paid the Journal office a brief call, renewing his paper for another year. Mr. Tucker informs us that he intends to leave Cass county in the early spring. He will dispose of his stock, implements &c. at a public sale, after which he will move with his family to Riverside, Cal. We regret to see such citizens as Mr. Tucker leave Cass county.

O. V. Virgin and wife of Murray came up this morning from their home and were passengers on the morning train for Omaha where they will spend the day.

Must be sold at once—Two fine cottages, good repair, well located, for particulars call at office.

Windham Investment & Loan Co.

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\$5, 7, \$9, \$11

MEN'S SUITS

\$7, \$9, \$12, \$15

MEN'S PANTS

\$1.39, \$1.99, \$2.49

BOY'S SUITS

\$1.39

Boy's Overcoats.....	\$ 1 99
Boy's Knee Pants.....	29
Wool Sox.....	19
Men's Work Shirts.....	39
4-in-Hand Ties.....	19

C. E.

WESCOTT'S SONS

THE HOME OF SATISFACTION

SEE PLATTS MOUTH SUCCEED!

TEAM RUNS AWAY AND SPILLS OCCUPANTS OF BOB SLED OUT

Julius Ramge, Ward Barr and Levi Patton Were Enjoying Moonlight Ride When the Accident Occurred.

A narrow escape from sudden and ignominious death took place last night somewhere in the neighborhood of ten o'clock when a team of fiery steeds belonging to Sam Smith and attached to a bob sled with a wagon box on it, got away and spilled the occupants of the box all over the landscape in the second ward. The exact circumstances surrounding the flight of the steeds and the spilling of the occupants of the wagon are not to be had and seem shrouded in a deep, dark, dank mystery.

The disaster was discovered by Herr Adolph Wesche who was hurrying home after a long and hard days work in his shoe shop. In company with Herr Carl Kunsman, the well known meat market man, Herr Wesche had walked out Washington avenue turning west on Elm toward his home and lingering long enough at Herr Kunsman's gate to say "Guten Nacht" or something that way, when Herr Kunsman went into the house and soon was wrapped in the arms of Morpheus.

Herr Wesche cogitating upon the hardness of the world and the high price of leather coupled with free hides, was wending his way along under the silvery stars when his ear was suddenly pierced with startling shrieks and yells such as "Whoa! Whoa!—you stop" and other equally wild ejaculations. He paused and listened and soon the hoof beats of flying horses struck upon his ear. Then into sight came a plunging, galloping team drawing a wagon box on bobs. The team plunged along upon the avenue with a speed startling in its intensity, and soon they were near to Heisel's mill when they swerved and, striking a large pile of cinders, the sled was overturned and one of the horses tore loose from the sled and rushed on north on Eleventh street toward the school house. As the sled turned over, the wagon box was hurled off and, according to Herr Wesche's story it turned over no less than four times

with the three unfortunate men in it. Believing he had been a witness to a terrible catastrophe, Herr Wesche hurried over to where the men were but by the time he arrived there the men were on their feet. By the light of his lantern, Mr. Wesche recognized two of the men, the third having gone in pursuit of the runaway horse. The two who he discovered were Julius Ramge and Levi Patton. The former was holding his head and groaning and declared that his head, was busted while the later was gathering his scattered wits and feeling of the large welts raised upon his person by the contact with the frozen earth and cinders and also letting out a few groans on his own hook. Ramge endeavored to convince Wesche that he was a dead man but the latter did not believe him owing to the strong odor of vinegar or something that way which pervaded the atmosphere. He states that he told him he had better be dead or words to that effect and also added a few sulphurous remarks about the nature of the business these men had out that way at that hour of night casting reflections upon the legitimacy of their trip.

While they stood thus feeling of their hurts and sending up low, tremulous sighs the third man came back leading the mustang and the remains of the harness. He was recognized as Ward Barr. No statement was vouchsafed by the men as to their purpose in taking on a cargo and starting out into the stilly night in the manner they did nor did they design to answer any questions posed at them by the inquiring Herr Wesche who left them with a few parting shots about their mission.

So far as can be learned neither of the men were hurt seriously although they have enough bruises to go around in a large sized community. The harness was some torn up but the team and rig was not much injured. None of the victims needed a doctor.

Sustains a Bad Burn.

Johnny Pries who is employed in the Burlington brass foundry has a very sore heel as a result of a slight accident which took place yesterday at the shops. He was engaged in helping fill a mould with molten brass when the moulder accidentally tipped the flash causing some of the molten metal to run into the lad's shoe around the heel. The injury was treated and the young man made as comfortable as possible. He will be kept off his work for some little time.

Mrs. William Oliver and daughter Miss Elizabeth came up last evening from Murray and spent the night in the city, being passengers this morning for Omaha where they will spend the day.

See James Sochor, the merchant tailor, about that new fall suit.