Judgement*

2Timothy 4:7-8 (7) I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:
(8) Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing.
Act 22:12-16 (12) And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt [there],
(13) Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.
(14) And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.
(15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.
(16) And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
To wash away thy sins is a figurative expression. like other metaphoric expressions, it puts the resemblance in place of the proper word. It means something analogous to what is said, consider this; And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb (Rev 7:14). *Washed in blood is a figurative expression. Here are two things equally incomprehensible, to wash garments white in blood, and to wash away sins in water. An efficacy is ascribed to water which it does not possess. But if blood can whiten or cleanse garments, certainly water can wash away sins, that effect is in the Bible. There is, then, a transferring of the efficacy of blood to water, and a transferring of the efficacy of water to blood. God has transferred, in some way, the whitening*

efficacy or cleansing power of water to blood, and the absolving or pardoning power of blood to water. What a gracious institution! God has opened a fountain for sin removal. He has given it an extension far and wide as sin has spread--far and wide as water flows. Where-ever water, faith, and the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit are, there will be found the efficacy of the blood of Jesus. This is figurative; but it is not a figure which misleads, for the meaning is, immersion for the remission of sins, by faith the subject of it is saved. Let's turn to;

1Peter 3:17-22 (17) For it is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing.
(18) For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:
(19) By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;
(20) Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.
(21) The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:
(22) Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

Thus baptism, says Peter, saves us, not by cleansing the body from its filth, but the conscience from its guilt. Yes, immersion saves us by burying us with Christ, and so our consciences are purified from dead works to serve the living God. Our Lord gave so much importance to Christian baptism that He gave the commission to convert and save the world in these words; "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved"

(Mark 16:16).

In some circles this commission is refered to as "water salvation", and is considered infective because it is believed the sinner is saved pryor to the introduction into baptism and therefore deemed unnecessary for salvation. But to the truly saved it is the gospel of Christ patterned after His own death, burial and rising from the grave never to die again. However, the gist of the "water salvation" proposition is; can water penetrate the skin and reach the conscience? But little do they realize that in such a gist, they laugh at and mock the whole Divine institution. He who thus objects to water, and the importance of immersion, objects to the whole remedial institution as taught by Christ, and insults the wisdom and goodness of God in the whole scheme of salvation. The experience of the myriads who were baptized for remission of sins detailed in the Christian scriptures, are worth more than the volumes of arguments from the lips and pens of unbelivers. How, then, can it be, that any person buried with Christ in immersion can rise with Christ, and not rise in a new state? Were any person to reason upon the simple importance of the action commanded by Jesus, it might be made apparent from the action itself, in its two parts, the burial and the resurrection, that it must import every thing we have heard the apostles ascribe to it. Peter first proclaimed reformation for the remission of sins; and in his last and farewell letters to the Christian communities he reminds them of that purification from their sins, received in and through immersion; and in the strongest terms cautions them against forgetting that they were so purified. Before anyone receives the name of Christian, he is liable to death, but when he receives that seal, he is delivered from death and assigned to life. Now that seal is water, into which persons go down liable to death, but come out of it assigned to life, for which reason this seal was preached and made use of that they might enter the Kingdom of God. And whenever a case shall occur

where there is little faith and no water, it makes void the value, excellency, and importance of both faith and grace. We enter the kingdom of nature by being born of the flesh. We enter the Kingdom of Heaven, on earth, under the reign of Jesus Christ in this life, by being born of water and of the Spirit. As Christian faith rests upon, and Christian practice proceeds from the testimony of God, and not from the reasonings of man, choose you this day whom you will follow. A word to the regenerated; you have experienced the truth of the promice, and, being introduced by that promise, you have become, like Isaac, the children of promise. You heard the testimony of God concerning Jesus of Nazareth, and you believed it. You were, in consequence of your faith, so disposed towards the person of Jesus as to be willing to put yourselves under His guidance. This faith, and this will, brought you to the water. You were not ashamed nor afraid to confess Him as God's only Son, you vowed allegiance to Him. Down into the water you were led. Then the name of the Holy Father, the Son, and the Spirit was pronounced upon your faith, and upon your person. You were then buried in the water under that name. The water closed itself upon you. In its womb you were concealed, into the Lord as in the water, you were immersed. But in the water you continued not. Of it you were born, and from it you came forth, raised with Jesus, and rising free from sin. Into the Kingdom of Jesus you have entered. The King of righteousness extended His sceptre over you. By being washed in baptism, you were sanctified, as well as acquitted. Adopted thus into the family of God, you have not only received the name, rank, and the dignity, but also the spirit of a son of God, and find, as such, that you are kings, priests, and heirs of God. If you suffer with Christ in His death through baptism, you will reign with Him. God has one way of bestowing every thing. Men cannot gather grapes of thorns, nor figs of thistles. The reason is, they do not grow there. We cannot have any

blessing, spiritual or physcial, but only in God's way of giving it. Corn and wheat cannot be obtained except from the plants which yield them. Without the plant we cannot have the fruit. That is the way of the whole material system. And in the world of spirits and spiritual influences it is the same. Moral law is as unchangable as the laws of nature. Moral means and ends are as inseparable as natural laws and ends. God cannot bestow grace upon the proud and cannot withold it from the humble. God could shower down wheat and corn, and give us rivers of milk and new wine, were it a question of mere power. But taking everything together, His wisdom, power, and goodness, He cannot do it. So neither can He give us faith without testimony, hope without promice, nor heaven without holiness. Neither can He bestow the blessings of the reign of heaven upon those who are the children of disobedience. Sadly, most men are reluctant to submit to God's government (Matt 7:13); yet in the end they must all bow to it; For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. (Romans 14:11).

But they object to bowing now, and venture invention for excusses. Knowing that natural and moral means and ends are true, yet object to immersion as a moral means and its ends unnecessary. However, it may be asked, why so many words on the subject of baptism and its commission to convert and save the world? After all, it was the subject of Judgement under consideration. However, the commission given by Christ for salvation has everything to do with Judgement. First, let me say, most of the words so far, are from the writings of a man who spent his life in study of God's word and we are the benefactors. His name is Alexander Campbell who bears the false accusation as founder of the Church of Christ. Aside from scriptural proof, there is historical evidence the Church of Christ was in existence well before the birth of Alexander Campbell which should dispell the false accusation. But men

love falsity to their own advantage, did not Christ carry false witness to the cross? Dr. Daniel Featley (b1578-d1645), was involved in the translation of the 1611 King James version of the Bible. He was an adversary of the Churches of Christ and authored the book, The Dippers Dipt. *The work was written to oppose congregations who call themselves "Churches of Christ" meeting in England in the 1600s, who baptised by immersion for remission of sins (Traces of the Kingdom-Keith Sisman). However, if doubt can be achieved, the same would be true of the institution of baptism ordained by Christ and of His Kingdom. Now the reason for so many words explaining the Lord's commission to convert and save the world by the gospel is best explained by the word itself, turn with me to;*
2Thessalonians 1:7-9 (7) And to you who are troubled rest with us, when the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels,
(8) In flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ:
(9) Who shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of his power;
{{From this information the conclusion is that when Jesus comes He will be prepared to administer the fire upon the unsaved. All fire will burn, but a flame is more active and penetrating, so the phrase, "flaming fire" is used to indicate the intensity of punishment that is to be inflicted upon the wicked. Vengeance is not used in the sense of spitework or the 'get even" spirit as men often do, but it is from an original that means legal and judicial punishment on one who has shown disrespect for some law. Know not God means those who refuse to recognize Him, and that attitude is manifested by their refusal to obey the Gospel of Christ who is the Son of God. The punishment to which the unsaved will be sentenced is described as destruction. The word does not mean total annihilation as certain false teachers claim. The wicked will not cease to be, but their right to happiness will be totally

destroyed. Hence they will be driven from the presence of God, and the separation will be everlasting. Bible Commentary--E.M. Zerr}}

Now Romans 6:3-4 explains a believers part in God's gift of grace, it reads; Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Jesus died to sin once and a believers reinactment of the death, burial and resurrection effects the same. Peter declared it as 'remission of sins.' This is how one is known of God, because it is the power of the gospel to become Sons of God, and is the reason for the answer Jesus gave in;

Matthew 7:21-27 (21) Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven.

(22) Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works?

(23) And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.

(24) Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:

(25) And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

(26) And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:

(27) And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

A Christian, as defined, not by any creed-maker, but by one

taught from heaven, is one that believes in one fact and has submitted to one institution, and whose whole department accords with the morality and virtue of the great Prophet. The one fact is expressed in one proposition--that Jesus the Nazarene is the Messiah. The evidence upon which it is to be believed is the testimony of 12 men, confirmed by prophecy, miracles, and spriritual gifts. The one faith is that from which repentance and confession is manifested. The one institution is baptism into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit. Every such person is a disciple in the fullest sense of the word and is known of God, when he has believed in the one fact and submitted to the one institution. If one has not submitted to the one institution, he is likened unto a foolish man, regardless if he has believed, or prophesied, or cast out devils, or done wonderful works. There are two classes of men in this world. They are in various manners contradistinguished from each other. They are called the righteous and the wicked, the saints and the sinners, the holy and the unholy, the obedient and the disobedient, he that feareth God and he that feareth Him not. Of the one class many things are predicated which are not in the other. Submission to the one institution it is (Gal 3:27)*, they are "in Christ", and as such are justified, sanctified, saved, children of God, joint heirs with Christ, an elect race, a royal priesthood, a peculiar people. Of the other class, these things are never predicated in the Bible. They are the unknown. They are enemies of God, even tho they may have done many wonderful works. And for they who would not have God's Son to be their saviour, he has appointed a day of judgement. They shall perish with an everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord, and from the glory of His power, when He shall come to be glorified in all His saints, and to be admired by all the believers. Then will the King say, Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels. They are the allies of satan in his rebellion*

against God, and have spent all their energies and fortunes on his side of the battle. They disregard the Spirit that descended from heaven on the day of pentacost, and has not formally ascended since. Now we cannot separate the Spirit and the word of God, whatever the word does, the Spirit does; and whatever the Spirit does, the word does in the work of converting men. Is it not more easy to plant than to cultivate? Is it not more easy to enter the matrimonial compact than to be an exemplary husband or wife? Is it not more easy to enter into Christian life than to retain and sustain it for threescore and ten years? Thus God has provided for us a sin-offering; a prophet to expound it, a priest to present it, a King with universal dominion to govern and protect all that by it are reconciled to God, through faith, that bringeth, repentance, confession, and baptism into His Son, who is our sin-offering. Having Him as our rightful Sovereign is all that we need to our present, and our spiritual and eternal salvation. And in all of this there is scriptural explaination of our hope, turn to;

1John 3:1-3 (1) Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. (2) Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is. (3) And every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself, even as he is pure.

In the present administration of the Kingdom of God, faith which is the effect of belief is the principle, and the ordiances are the means of all spiritual enjoyment. Without faith in the testimony of God, a person is without God, without Christ, and without hope in the world. A Christless universe, as respects spiritual life and joy, is the most perfect blank which fancy can create. Without faith, nothing in the Bible can be enjoyed. In the Kingdom of Heaven, faith is, then, the principle, and

ordiances, the means of enjoyment; because all the wisdom, power, love, mercy, compassion, or grace of God is in the ordinances of the Kingdom of Heaven; and if all grace be in them it can only be enjoined through them. What, then, under the present administration of the Kingdom of Heaven, are the ordinances which contain the grace of God? They are preaching the gospel--immersion in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Ghost--the reading and teaching the living oracles--the Lord's day observance of worship--the Lord's communion--prayer--confession of sins--praise--exhortation--admonition--discipline, ect. These primary and sacred ordiances of the Kingdom of Heaven are the means of our individual enjoyment of the present salvation of God and of that to come. Without the sun, there is no solar influence; without the moon, there is no lunar influence; without the clouds, there can be no rain; without the ordiances of the Kingdom of Heaven, there can be no heavenly influence exhibited or felt.
God had, then, long before the Christian era--from the foundation of the world, appointed a day in which He will judge the world righteously by Jesus Christ. The question is, then, will you be judged dead in sin or alive in Christ Jesus. There is no hope for those 'dead in sin', who have shunned Christ as saviour and Lord. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire (Rev 20:15). *Of this judgement prepare by faith; What is faith? Faith in Christ is the effect of belief, resulting in repentance, confession and baptism for remission of sin which is the effect of faith. This is the gospel. It's invitation is there for you, also prayer for other requests, in either case come while we persuade with song.*

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