

DIVINE HEALING WATER BAPTISM THE LORD'S SUPPER

Perhaps no two men of God have done more, by their writings, to aid Christians to get an intelligent, working knowledge of the Bible, than have Mr. John Darby, considered the founder of the Plymouth Brethren, and Dr. C. I. Scofield, the author of the Scofield Reference Bible, and also the author of a pamphlet entitled, "Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth".

We understand that the original cost of the plates of Dr. Scofield's Bible was paid by one who was affiliated with the Plymouth Brethren in New York.

Mr. Darby was positive that the so-called "great commission", of Matthew 28:19 and 20, was not the marching order for the Lord's messengers during this age of grace. He was also positive that in Acts 3:19 to 21, the nation Israel was given another opportunity to receive Jesus of Nazareth as their King and Messiah. If Israel's rulers had repented God would have sent Jesus Christ back from heaven to bring about the restitution of all things spoken by the mouth of all the holy prophets since the world began. Acts 3:21.

Several years after the Scofield Reference Bible was published, Mr. A. E. Bishop, a missionary, under the Central American Mission, of which Doctor Scofield was the founder, published a pamphlet showing that the signs and miracles of Mark 16:17 and 18 and the "sign" gifts of I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 ceased after the close of the "transition" period of about thirty years, covered by the Book of Acts. The Moody Colportage Association has printed several editions of this pamphlet. They are still printing and selling it. In the front of this pamphlet is printed Doctor Scofield's unreserved endorsement of the contents of the book.

This message got me into plenty of trouble, for which I most heartily praise the Lord. Presently I shall explain the reason. Let us read several statements from the Bishop pamphlet.

"There is no foundation in the Word of God for the prevailing popular doctrine of 'Divine Healing'."

"A careful study of the Epistles, especially of the latest Epistles of Paul, which give the normal course of the Church during the present dispensation would dismount all from their hobbies, eliminate the last vestige of Judaism from their lives."

"After repeated study of the Epistles written after Paul's arrival at Rome, I am convinced that in them is found a curative teaching for all of the Present-day, delusions and fanaticisms found among many of the most sincere saints in the Church."

"The sign gifts of I Corinthians were operative only during the Book of Acts period."

In 1922 I was teaching the Bible in the city of Indianapolis, Indiana. There was a splendid spiritual work of the Lord established there, but there was considerable disturbance and division because of two different groups of "sinless perfection" people who were attending the meetings and propagating their peculiar "holiness" doctrines among the people, the "Nazarenes" and the "Pentecostalists". It was at that time that a gentleman handed me Mr. Bishop's pamphlet.

I became acquainted with several of the preachers affiliated with those two groups. One evening I observed that the Pentecostal preacher passed the Nazarene preacher, with whom he was acquainted, but turned away to avoid greeting him. Upon investigation I learned that the

Nazarene preacher had severely criticized the Pentecostal preacher because the Pentecostalist claimed two more of the sign gifts of I Corinthians 12:8 to 11 than the Nazarene preacher claimed. The two additional gifts were “tongues”, and the “interpretation of tongues”. The Nazarene preacher had ridiculed the “tongues” meetings carried on by the Pentecostalists

Let us carefully and prayerfully read I Corinthians 12:8 to 13 and I Corinthians 12:28.

“For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; To another faith by the same Spirit; to another the gifts of healing by the same Spirit; To another the working of miracles; to another prophecy; to another discerning of spirits; to another divers kinds of tongues; to another the interpretation of tongues: But all these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit, dividing to every man severally as He will. For as the Body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one Body, being many are one body: so also is Christ. For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one Body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.”

“And God hath set some in the Church, first apostles, secondarily prophets, thirdly teachers, after that miracles, then gifts of healings, helps, governments, diversities of tongues.” I Corinthians 12:28.

Note carefully I Corinthians 12:11, “ALL these worketh that one and selfsame Spirit”. I Corinthians 12:28, “God set some in the Church”, “miracles”, “healings”, “kinds of tongues.” If those sign-gifts were to be exercised by members of the Body of Christ, how many of them were to be exercised? Who was right, the Nazarene or the Pentecostalist, if either was right? Of course, the Pentecostalist.

In I Corinthians 11:1 Paul wrote: “Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ.” Did either the Nazarene or the Pentecostal preacher join with Paul in two of his declarations in I Corinthians? In I Corinthians 14:18, Paul wrote, “I thank my God I speak with tongues more than ye all.” The Nazarene preacher, who was opposed to “tongues”, could not say this. The Pentecostalist might have said it.

Then Paul said, in I Corinthians 1:14 to 17, “I thank God I baptized very few of you;” “I know not whether I baptized any other;” “For Christ sent me not to baptize.” Neither the Nazarene nor the Pentecostalist would thus thank God. So neither of them obeyed God by following Paul as their example.

Before again referring to the Indianapolis meeting, let us consider:

THE SIGNS AND SIGN GIFTS

Speaking of these sign-gifts, of I Corinthians 12:8 to 12, we know that the Corinthians had been washed, sanctified and justified. I Corinthians 6:11. They had been baptized into the Body of Christ. They were with Christ—“one spirit” and “one flesh”. I Corinthians 6:16 and 17. They were temples of the Holy Spirit. I Corinthians 6:19. They were saints who are yet to judge the world and angels.” I Corinthians 6:1 to 4.

But Paul wrote to them, “I speak to your shame”. I Corinthians 6:5. “There is utterly a sin among you;” “Ye do wrong and defraud your brethren.” I Corinthians 6:7 and 8. “Ye are yet carnal: whereas there is among you envying and strife, and divisions;” “Ye walk as men.” I Corinthians 3:3. “It is reported commonly that there is fornication among you.” I Corinthians

5:1. "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh judgment; for this cause many are weak and sickly among you and many sleep." I Corinthians 11:29 and 30. Some of these Corinthian saints sat at the table where meats were offered to idols. I Corinthians 8:10. Some of them said, there would be no resurrection of the dead. I Corinthians 15:12.

Note Paul's words to those "washed", "sanctified" and "justified." I Corinthians 6:11.

"And I, brethren, could not speak unto you as unto spiritual, but as unto carnal, even as unto babes in Christ. I have fed you with milk, and not with meat: for hitherto ye were not able to bear it, neither yet now are ye able." I Corinthians 3:1 and 2.

Now how would you say those first-century Corinthian saints compare with the saints of 1941 A. D., who are members of the same Body, for believers are still being baptized by one Spirit into one Body?

Today among the different "sinless-perfection" or "miracle-working" or "healing" groups, it is generally taught that if we were as faithful and as spiritual as were those first-century Church-members, we would be exercising all of the sign-gifts of I Corinthians 12:8 to 11.

There are today some splendid, godly, spiritual, redeemed men and women who are earnestly endeavoring to please the Lord by yielding to Him for separation and service as they give forth their testimonies concerning the marvelous saving and keeping grace of God. They love the Lord Jesus Christ and as members of His Body they are trying to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith they are called. Not one of these spiritual saints, with a grace testimony, does, or can, perform any of these miracles. They make no claim to these sign-gifts. They should claim and obey the truth of Ephesians 4:7, but in that program the miracles and signs are absent.

The gifts of "miracles", "healings", "tongues", and "interpretation of tongues", are not found in the Body of Christ today, except in the counterfeit. Is this because members of the Body of Christ in 1941 are less spiritual and less faithful than those carnal Corinthians, or for the reason presented by Doctor Scofield? "The sign-gifts of I Corinthians 12 were operative only during the Book of Acts period."

PHYSICAL HEALING

It is significant that after the close of the "Acts" period, even at the end of Paul's earthly career, he wrote concerning a faithful saint "Trophimus have I left at Miletum sick". II Timothy 4:20.

If ordinary Christians in 1941 can heal the sick surely that extraordinary man of God would have healed Trophimus, if God's program had not changed.

Then Paul wrote to another saint, who was a genuine, faithful, uncompromising, spiritual, fruitful saint: "Drink no longer water, but use a little wine for thy stomach's sake and thine often infirmities (sicknesses)" I Timothy 5:23.

Then he wrote of another such saint: "Yet I supposed it necessary to send unto you Epaphroditus, my brother, and companion in labour, and fellow-soldier, but your messenger, and he that ministered to my wants, For he longed after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick. For indeed he was sick nigh unto death: but God had

mercy on him; and not on him only, but on me also, lest I should have sorrow upon sorrow.”
Philippians 2:25 to 27.

Here then is something of God’s “signless” program after the close of the Book of Acts. Physical remedies for physical diseases mixed with prayer. Some saints were raised up to the glory of the Lord— some were left sick to the glory of the Lord.

“For which cause we faint not; for though our outward man decay thoroughly the inward man is renewed day by day”. II Corinthians 4:16. “And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them that are called according to His purpose”. Romans 8:28.

Praying saints are still having the same experience.

Let us never forget the truth of Romans 8:23.

“And not only they but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body.”

We groan as Christians, because we have bodies of humiliation, corruptible bodies, bodies which are daily decaying thoroughly. No matter whether saint or sinner resorts to physical remedies, to religious cures, or to Divine healing, the death rate will continue to be one apiece until the Lord Jesus appears to change the bodies of His saints that they may be fashioned like unto His own glorious body.

That our Heavenly Father does hear prayer for saints who are sick, and does restore some of them, no child of God will deny, but this is so different from certain members in the Body of Christ with the special gift of healing. And no intelligent Christian, taught by the Holy Spirit, would teach that general physical healing is in the atonement.

The careful student of the Scriptures knows that there is no Bible record that any servant of the Lord anointed a single Gentile with oil. Neither is there a single record proving that any Gentile Christian had the Divine right to place hands upon any other saint or sinner.

FROM MARK 16 TO ACTS 28

We quote Mark 16:14 to 18 and Acts 28:25 to 28:

“AFTERWARD HE APPEARED UNTO THE ELEVEN AS THEY SAT AT MEAT, AND UPBRAIDED THEM FOR THEIR UNBELIEF AND HARDNESS OF HEART, BECAUSE THEY BELIEVED NOT THEM WHICH HAD SEEN HIM AFTER HE WAS RISEN. AND HE SAID UNTO THEM, GO YE INTO ALL THE WORLD, AND PREACH THE GOSPEL TO EVERY CREATURE. HE THAT BELIEVETH AND IS BAPTIZED SHALL BE SAVED; BUT HE THAT BELIEVETH NOT SHALL BE DAMNED. AND THESE SIGNS SHALL FOLLOW THEM THAT BELIEVE; IN MY NAME SHALL THEY CAST OUT DEVILS; THEY SHALL SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES; THEY SHALL TAKE UP SERPENTS; AND IF THEY DRINK ANY DEADLY THING, IT SHALL NOT HURT THEM; THEY SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE SICK, AND THEY SHALL RECOVER.” Mark 16:14 to 18.

“For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. Be it known

therefore unto you, that the salvation of God is sent unto the Gentiles, and that they will hear it.” Acts 28:27 and 28.

Both of these messages were spoken to a company of Jews. The first company was a group of eleven saved Jews in the land of the Jews. The second company was a group of unsaved Jews in the Gentile city, Rome.

Now the question—did the Lord have one program from Mark 16 to Acts 28 and then change His spiritual program? Some one has called Acts 28:25 to 28 Israel’s Ichabod—Israel’s fall. Did Paul’s final words in the last chapter of Acts mark a crisis in the history of God’s nation Israel?

It is most significant that the last sixteen chapters of the Book of Acts records the activities of one man and mentions only such other persons as had dealings with that man, Paul.

Note his testimony in Romans 11:13:

“For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles I magnify mine office.”

It is also significant that about one half of Paul’s Epistles were written before the Divine judgment of Acts 28 and the other half thereafter. This should cause us to ask this question, “If the Book of Acts is the record of the acts of the apostles, and if the last sixteen chapters tell of the acts of Paul, why does the Book suddenly stop right in the midst of Paul’s activities several years before his death?” Paul certainly was unceasingly active right up to the last moment of his life. It is generally believed that he experienced two imprisonments at Rome—the first time for “the hope of Israel” (Acts 28:20) and the second time for “the Mystery among the Gentiles”. Ephesians 6:19 and 22—Colossians 4:3 and 4 and 1:24 to 27.

The careful student of the Book of Acts, and the “Acts” period, will learn that during the first nine chapters of Acts, God’s order was, “to the Jews, and not to the Gentiles”, (Acts 3:29 to 32 and 10:28 and 11:19). Then from Acts 13 to Acts 28:28, God’s order was “to the Jews first and also to the Gentiles Acts 13:46—Acts 18:5 and 6—Romans 1:16 and Romans 11:11 and 30.

Then in Ephesians and Colossians, Philippians, Titus and II Timothy, written after the close of Acts, God’s order was no longer “to the Jews first.”

It was certainly not an oversight on the part of the Holy Spirit that He made no mention of “signs”, “miracles”, “tongues”, and “healings”, in Paul’s Epistles, written after Acts 28:28. There is a marked absence of signs and the sign gifts in Paul’s prison Epistles. In this connection we should study in I Corinthians 13:8 and 13 what was to pass away and what was to abide.

THE SIGNS OF MARK 16:17 AND 18

“AND THESE SIGNS SHALL FOLLOW THEM THAT BELIEVE: IN MY NAME SHALL THEY CAST OUT DEVILS; THEY SHALL SPEAK WITH NEW TONGUES; THEY SHALL TAKE UP SERPENTS; AND IF THEY DRINK ANY DEADLY THING, IT SHALL NOT HURT THEM; THEY SHALL LAY HANDS ON THE SICK, AND THEY SHALL RECOVER” Mark 16:17 and 18.

Some man of God truly said, “if these signs following in these verses are the credentials of a Christian, then no Christians have lived on the earth since the first century.”

It is most amusing, if it were not sad, to hear the explanations and twistings of Mark 16:14 to 18, by men of God who are leaders among aggressive evangelical Christians.

Many of these brethren corrupt and change the Scriptures to fit into their denominational or church creeds and programs. They do not preach, “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved”, “with signs following”. But they preach “he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized”. Then forget the signs. When a modernist thus twists the Scriptures they publicly condemn him. But they wink at their own twisting. What God hath joined together let no man put asunder, unless we can prove that God later on separated them.

Get out your Bible: read carefully and find one chapter where water baptism is mentioned without some sign, miracle, or Jewish symbol recorded in the same chapter. Then carefully compare Matthew 26:28 with Luke 3:3 and Acts 2:38:

“For this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins.” Matthew 26:28.

“And He came into all the country about Jordan. preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” Luke 3:3.

“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.”

“FOR THE REMISSION OF SINS.” This is stated in very plain language, which no man has the right to alter.

It is so difficult to be unprejudiced, even if we do resolve that we will be honest. We have been so hindered from being open, honest, sincere, unafraid Bereans, because of denominational loyalty or obstinate wills or preconceived opinions based upon traditions. Some one has said that the three most difficult words for a preacher to say are, “I was wrong”.

What “grace” preacher today preaches water baptism unto repentance for the remission of sins? Is Acts 2:38 our “grace” message? Read it:

“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.”

JOHN’S BAPTISM

Now let us read carefully John 1:31

“AND I KNEW HIM NOT: BUT THAT HE SHOULD BE MADE MANIFEST TO ISRAEL, THEREFORE AM I COME BAPTIZING WITH WATER.”

Why did John the Baptist baptize with water? “That Christ might be made manifest to Israel”; “for the remission of sins?” What was the significance of the water baptism received by Saul of Tarsus who was converted some months after Christ died on the cross? Hear his own testimony: “And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins. calling on the name of the Lord.” Acts 22:16.

“BE BAPTIZED AND WASH AWAY THY SINS.” Very plain language this. Paul was not buried to witness to the world that he had been buried with Christ in baptism. W-a-s-h does not spell b-u-r-y.

Note the order in Acts 8:5 to 13: Philip presented the message of Mark 16:14 to 18 in Samaria. The people believed Philip and God's Word. Then Peter and John came several days later and laid hands on those baptized believers and they received the Holy Spirit.

WHEN WERE THE TWELVE BAPTIZED?

Some dispensational Bible teachers teach that the Jews, including the twelve apostles, who were converted while Jesus Christ was on earth, received "kingdom" water baptism. They say "Christian" baptism began on the day of Pentecost when the Body of Christ began. Then they claim that the twelve apostles, with the one hundred and twenty, were the first believers to be baptized into the Body of Christ. But then they run into trouble, because they admit that the Twelve were not re-baptized. Of course, they have more trouble with the message of Peter on the day of Pentecost and the sale of their houses and lots. Acts 2:41 to 43—Acts 4:34.

These brethren, without Divine authority, twist Acts 2:38 as they do Mark 16:14 to 16. They preach "repent and receive the Holy Spirit and be baptized with water," not even quoting the words "for the remission of sins" They forget about "the sale of their property." They say that was a kingdom program. They preach "he that believeth and is saved shall be baptized—"no signs."

You may ask any intelligent spiritual "grace" preacher, "Does water baptism help to save a sinner?" "Will water baptism help get any one into the true Bible Church?" "Does water baptism have any merit or value to help the believer's standing in Christ?" Does the believer have to prove to God or to man that he is saved by receiving water baptism?" To every question there will be a prompt, dogmatic, unmistakable "no". If there had been any value whatever to water baptism in connection with the Pauline gospel of grace, by which we are saved, that greatest of all soul-winners, instead of saying "I thank God I baptized only a few of you" would have baptized every believer he saw and he would have boasted about it.

There is something radically wrong with all of the different water ceremonies practiced by evangelical Christians. It is high time that some of the Bible teachers in the groups of Fundamentalists, who are not afraid of men, should rescue their fellow Fundamentalists from their inconsistencies and faulty dispensationalism, and learn why Christians are wholly disregarding Ephesians 4:3 to 6.

FOLLOWING CHRIST IN BAPTISM

Now and then some "grace" messenger calls upon his followers to follow the Lord Jesus in baptism. The Lord Jesus was circumcised thirty years before He was baptized. Luke 2:17 to 27. Right after He was baptized He went on the Jewish Sabbath into the Jewish synagogue, as had been His custom. Luke 4:16. He told the Jews to whom He ministered to obey the law and find the priest and present a gift, Matthew 8:1 to 4. Matthew 23:1 to 3.

While Jesus Christ was on earth He was a Minister of the circumcision, under the law, sent only to Israel, preaching "the kingdom of heaven is at hand", healing the sick. Romans 15:8—Matthew 15:24—Galatians 4:4—Luke 19:9—Matthew 10:5 to 8. While Jesus of Nazareth was being approved by God in the midst of Israel with signs and miracles, (Acts 2:22), so far as

the Divine Record is concerned, only one Gentile man received a blessing from Him and that man loved the Jews and built them a synagogue. Luke 7:1 to 8. Should we tell believers to follow Jesus in circumcision or to the Jewish synagogue on the Jewish Sabbath, or just in the matter of baptism?

Note Matthew 10:5 “go not to Gentiles”. If we are to go back to Jesus on earth for our program, we will certainly run into an Old Testament religious Jewish program. Going the other side of the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus we shall find the priests, offerings, sacrifices, the Scribes and Pharisees in Moses’ seat. We shall not find the dispensation of grace for Gentiles or membership in the Body of Christ. Let us not join with those whose slogan is “back to Jesus”, for we are seated with Him in the heavenlies where He is far above. Let us not go back to the land of the Jews under the law. Shall we go back to where Jesus called the Gentiles “dogs”? Matthew 15:25 to 27.

Some years after Christ died God opened a door of faith unto the Gentiles. Acts 14:27. Paul was “the apostle to the Gentiles”. He said, “Christ sent me not to baptize”. Paul never once intimated that water baptism was a witness to the world that a member of Christ’s Body had been baptized into the death of Christ, buried and raised with Him. The baptism of Romans 6:3 and 4 is both meritorious and efficacious and if there is any water there, water baptism made saints out of sinners.

We quote Romans 6:3 and 4:

“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.”

With these verses read Colossians 2:11 and 12:

“In Whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ. Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.”

“For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.” Galatians 3:27.

Then note Ephesians 4:5:

“ONE LORD, ONE FAITH, ONE BAPTISM”

All of these baptisms refer to one and the same Divine baptism In which a believer is baptized into Christ, into the death of Christ, into the resurrected Christ, into the Body of Christ. Colossians 2:11. Is God’s explanation of the baptism of Colossians 2:12, “without hands”? This Divine baptism makes the believer a member of the true Bible Church and makes him complete in Christ. Colossians 2:10.

SEVERAL BAPTISMS-ONE BAPTISM

Most “grace” preachers claim that we are working under the “great commission” of Matthew 28:19 and 20 and that we are to baptize with water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, after believers are made members of the Body of Christ by Holy Spirit baptism. But they do not know what for. Many defend their practice because “it is too late to change”. But not one of the dozen or more water baptism theories can be proved by the Bible rightly divided.

They cannot prove their practice by the Bible, except by corrupting some Scriptures and wholly ignoring other Scriptures. In addition to the baptism of Matthew 28:19 and 20, which most Christians claim to be “Christian” baptism, note the three baptisms of Luke 3:16.

“JOHN ANSWERED, SAYING UNTO THEM ALL, I INDEED BAPTIZE YOU WITH WATER, BUT ONE MIGHTIER THAN I COMETH THE LATCHET OF WHOSE SHOES I AM NOT WORTHY TO UNLOOSE: HE SHALL BAPTIZE YOU WITH THE HOLY GHOST AND WITH FIRE.”

“WATER”—“HOLY SPIRIT”—“FIRE”—THREE BAPTISMS

Now note the fourth baptism of Luke 12:50:

“BUT I HAVE A BAPTISM TO BE BAPTIZED WITH: AND HOW AM I STRAITENED TILL IT BE ACCOMPLISHED.”

This is Christ’s baptism on the cross—“DEATH”. Including Matthew 28 we have five baptisms. But we read in Ephesians 4:3 to 6:

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, ONE BAPTISM, One God and father of all, Who is above all and through all, and in you all.”

Which of the five baptisms of Luke and Matthew is the ONE BAPTISM of Ephesians 4:5? The one Divine baptism of Ephesians 4:5 is the “death” baptism of Romans 6:3 and Colossians 2:12.

It is significant that when Christ mentioned His “death” baptism He gave this order to His apostles

“Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ.” Matthew 16:20. Christ, in the twelfth chapter of Luke, mentioned His “death” baptism. Death baptism is mentioned in Romans 6:3 and 4.

Now check up on this interesting fact there is no water baptism in the last twelve chapters of Luke, after Christ mentioned His “death” baptism. There is no record that any one received water baptism after Paul wrote of the “death” baptism of Romans 6:3 and 4.

Why did John baptize with water “And I knew Him not: but that He should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.” John 1:31. What did Christ say in Matthew 16:20? “Then charged He His disciples that they should tell no man that He was Jesus the Christ”. After that there was no need for water baptism as long as this order stood.

But later on, what happened? “Then said Jesus, Father forgive them for they know not what they do.” After this prayer the same Jews who were denounced as “serpents”, “vipers” and “hypocrites” in Matthew 23 were tenderly and affectionately addressed as children of the covenant in Acts 3:17 and 25.

Christ’s order of Matthew 16:20 was rescinded. The Lord began anew with Israel on the day of Pentecost. Note Acts 2:36:

“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.” Surely the Lord began anew with Israel on the day of Pentecost. Strange! Here the twelve apostles did the very thing they were told not to do in Matthew 16:20. They testified to Israel that Jesus was Christ. So did Paul in Acts 9:20 and in Acts 17:3 and 4. Why? Because of Christ’s prayer on the cross.

FROM PENTECOST TO ROMANS 11:15

With Israel’s new opportunity to accept Jesus as Christ and King, water baptism was again in order, in line with John 1:31, until the rejection was announced in Romans 11:1 to 15. Note Romans 11:15:

“FOR IF THE CASTING AWAY OF THEM BE THE RECONCILING OF THE WORLD, WHAT SHALL THE RECEIVING OF THEM BE, BUT LIFE FROM THE DEAD?”

Here we have a radical chance indicated: the casting away of Israel meant the reconciling of Gentiles. This is one of the most important dispensational verses in the Bible. Pause. Meditate. Catch the full significance of the truth of Romans 11:15 and 11:30. Here we learn the all important truth, the sons of Abraham lost their place of special privilege. Racial and religious barriers were removed and now the other children of Adam were justified without a cause by God’s grace. Romans 3:24.

Paul was the Lord’s “reconciliation” preacher. WITH THE FIRST MENTION OF “RECONCILIATION” in Paul’s Epistles, there was no further record of any water ceremony. God was through with ceremonial washings and all religious practices when He was through with His religious nation. Note Hebrews 9:10:

“Which stood only in meats and drinks, and divers baptisms, and carnal ordinances, imposed on them until the time of reformation.”

With the ministry of reconciliation the reformation came.

There were no religious baptisms until God gave them to Israel at Sinai. Members of Christ’s Body today are united to the Head in the heavenlies, baptized with His baptism and are complete in Him, and have nothing to do with water baptism.

SIGNS AND BAPTISM AFTER ACTS 28

Back to the meetings at Indianapolis. One night in that city, when a number of Pentecostalists were present, including two of their preachers, I preached on the subject, “Why Tongues Ceased When Paul Reached Rome.”

The next night one of the Pentecostalist preachers came back to the meeting. He said, “Brother, I am thoroughly convinced, and I am giving up “Pentecostalism”, but it seems to me that the same five reasons you gave last night will prove that water baptism ceased at the same time.” At first I said “no”. But after hours of prayerful, diligent study of the Bible I saw that that Pentecostalist was right. Water baptism and signs are found together in the New Testament Scriptures, except that John the Baptist performed no miracles and Christ did no baptizing. In Paul’s Prison Epistles we find no water baptism and neither signs nor tongues nor sign healings. We find different gifts to the Body and one Divine baptism in Ephesians chapter four. Certainly

the Holy Spirit knew that it would be out of the question for believers with such water baptism confusion to endeavor to keep the unity of the Spirit.

HOW ABOUT THE LORD'S SUPPER?

I was ordained by the Presbytery and became a Presbyterian minister. Presbyterian "teaching" elders are expected to teach that water baptism by sprinkling superseded circumcision, and that the Lord's Supper superseded the Passover.

Even the superficial student of the Bible knows that Abram was declared righteous in uncircumcision. Romans 4:7 to 10. At that time the Scriptures foresaw that God would justify heathen. in Paul's day, by faith without religion, law, or circumcision. Galatians 3:8 and Romans 4:7 to 10. Therefore, such an argument would rule out baptism for Gentiles. And again, no girls were circumcised. Therefore, no girls should be baptized. But men and women were baptized in Acts 6. Again while Jesus Christ was on earth, no man was baptized who had not first been circumcised. Peter got into trouble for baptizing uncircumcised Cornelius. Acts 11:1 to 6. Circumcision was practiced among Christian Jews just as far into the "Acts" period as was water baptism.

Most Presbyterian preachers, who are Premillenarians, know that they are preaching and practicing error concerning water baptism; but they see they are just as Scriptural as are any of the "immersionists". They must hold on to water baptism of some kind if they are to hold their positions and so the leaders continue to lead their followers in their unscriptural water theory. Sectarianism has played havoc with "Body" truth.

The "grace" immersionists are really becoming liberal and gracious. They are now giving the right hand of fellowship to sprinklers. But they know, and you know, and I know, that there is as much difference between the significance which the Baptists or Plymouth Brethren attach to water and that taught by the Presbyterians as there is between black and white. If one is Scriptural, the other is absurd. But as one man of God said to me, "It is too late to change. I'll take them in "sprinkled", "Immersed" or "dry"; but he admitted that after years as an outstanding Fundamentalist, he didn't understand the why of water baptism.

PASSOVER AND THE LORD'S SUPPER

Several months before the Lord at Sinai entered into that new covenant (the law) with Israel, which is now "the Old Covenant", made old by Christ' work on the cross, the Lord instructed Israel, in Egyptian bondage, concerning the Passover. These instructions are recorded in the twelfth chapter of Exodus. They took the lamb, without blemish, on the tenth day of the first month. It was killed on the fourteenth day in the evening. Exodus 12:3 to 6. The blood was sprinkled on the door post.

"And they shall eat the flesh in that night, roast with fire, and unleavened bread; and with bitter herbs they shall eat it." "And thus shall Ye eat it; with your loins girded, your shoes on your feet, and your staff in your hand: and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the Lord's Passover." Exodus 12:8 and 11.

“WHEN I SEE THE BLOOD, I WILL PASS OVER YOU.” Exodus 12:13.

Then note I Corinthians 5:7 and 8:

“Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us: Therefore let us keep the feast, not with old leaven, neither with the leaven of malice and wickedness; but with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth.”

Surely the “Passover” lamb spoke of Jesus Christ the Lamb of God. For centuries the Jews annually observed the Passover. One of the last acts of the Lord Jesus, before His death, was to observe the Passover with His disciples. Let us read very carefully Matthew 26:17 to 20 and 26 to 29.

“Now the first day of the feast of unleavened bread the disciples came to Jesus, saying unto Him, Where wilt Thou that we prepare for Thee to eat the Passover? And He said, Go into the city to such a man and say unto him, The Master saith, My time is at hand; I will keep the Passover at thy house with My disciples. And the disciples did as Jesus had appointed them; and they, made ready the Passover. Now when the even was come, He sat down with the twelve.”

“And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is My body and He took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is My blood of the New Testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins. But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father’s kingdom.”

We might ask: what has bread, with the fruit of the vine, to do with roast lamb, bitter herbs, and unleavened bread?

And then there are some certain brethren who ask why Gentile members of the Body of Christ should have anything to do with the New Covenant, inasmuch as God’s Word plainly states, in Jeremiah 31:31 to 35, and in Hebrews 8:7 to 11, that both the Old Covenant and the New Covenant are “Israelitish”.

These certain brethren affirm that the Lord’s Supper is not for members of “the Church of the Mystery”, “the Joint-Body” of Ephesians 3:6. They quote II Corinthians 3:6—Ephesians 2:12 and I Corinthian: 11:25

“Who also hath made us able ministers of THE NEW TESTAMENT; not of the letter, but of the Spirit; for the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.”

That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers FROM THE COVENANTS of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.”

“After the same manner also He took the cup, when He had supped, saying, This cup is THE NEW TESTAMENT in My blood; this do ye, as oft as ye drink it, in remembrance of Me.”

Their argument is, that the Gentiles, in the Epistle to the Ephesians, are referred to as non-covenant Gentile: and therefore, God was dealing with them in a manner different from His dealings with them during the “Acts” period when Paul said. “we are able ministers of the New Covenant.”

These brethren follow the dispensationalism of Dr. E. W. Bullinger of England, and his successor, Mr. Charles Welsh. and teach that not only did God change His spiritual program

after Acts 28:28, but that an entirely new and different Church began after that Divine judgment. They claim that the Body of Ephesians 3:6 is a Body different from the Body of Romans 12:4 and 5 and I Corinthians 12:13. They use Romans 15:27, Acts 28:20, Acts 26:22 and Romans 11:24 to prove that the Church of the “Acts” period was an Israelitish kingdom Church, and the hope of the members of that “Acts” Church was “the hope of Israel”. Acts 28:20.

They claim that the Lord’s Supper was the continuation of Israel’s Passover and because it was mentioned in connection with Israel’s New Covenant, the members of the Body of Ephesians have nothing to do with that Israelitish ordinance. They teach that in the economy and message of grace Gentiles are saved by the blood of Christ and not by the blood of the New Covenant. Ephesians 2:15 and Colossians 1:20.

THE LORD’S SUPPER AND SIGNS

Another argument they present for the elimination of the Lord’s Supper from “the dispensation of the mystery” (Ephesians 3:9) is, that, with the revelation of the mystery, after Acts 28:28, signs ceased. Before that time there were “sign” judgments upon those who unworthily sat at the table. Note I Corinthians 11:29 and 30:

“For he that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord’s Body. For this cause many are weak and sickly among you, and many sleep.”

They argue that inasmuch as the signs ceased, the Lord’s Supper also ceased.

By the same unsound argument we could prove that the gospel is no more to be proclaimed.

Note the similarity in the language of Paul, in I Corinthians 15:3 and 4 and I Corinthian 11:23.

“For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; And that He was buried, and that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

“For I have received of the Lord that which also I delivered unto you, That the Lord Jesus the same night in which He was betrayed, took bread.”

Then note Romans 15:18 and 19 and II Corinthians 12:12:

“To make the Gentiles obedient by word and deed, through mighty signs and wonders—I have fully preached the gospel of Christ.”

“Truly the signs of an apostle were wrought among you in all patience, in signs, and wonders, and mighty deeds.”

Mighty signs accompanied the proclamation of the gospel of grace by Paul during the “Acts” period. Signs ceased after Acts 28:28. Then by the same foolish argument of these brethren, who would rule out the Lord’s Supper after Acts 28:28 because signs ceased, the gospel should not have been proclaimed after Acts 28:28.

“These brethren have been called “ultra-dispensationalists” or “hyperdispensationalists” because of these extreme views concerning two Bodies, the elimination of the Lord’s Table, and the teaching that Israel and not the Body of Christ is to be the Bride of Christ.

They claim that the Lord's Supper will be in God's program in the coming kingdom age, when Luke 22:29 and 30 and Matthew 26:29 are fulfilled.

"And I appoint unto you, a kingdom as My Father hath appointed unto Me; that ye may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel."

"But I say unto you, I will not drink henceforth of this fruit of the vine, until that day when I drink it new with you in My Father's kingdom."

But we ask of these brethren, why confuse "after the King comes" with the expression in I Corinthians 11:26, "till He come"?

TILL HE COME

Let us look at I Corinthians 11:26:

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death TILL HE COME." The expression here "come" is in the Greek "elthe" and means "shall have come". Then the members of Christ's Body were and are to remember the death of the Son "till He shall have come". That event is still future. So we are still to break bread and drink of the cup, "till He come".

CHRIST AND THE NEW COVENANT

All dispensational students of the Scriptures believe that wonderful things are going to happen to Israel under the guarantee of the New Covenant of Jeremiah 31:31 to 38. They also believe and teach that the "kingdom" promises in the Davidic and Abrahamic covenants have been interrupted, and that we are now living in a parenthesis, a grace dispensation. Of course we know that there is a difference between "the kingdom of heaven" presented by Christ on earth and to Israel in Acts 3:19 to 21 and the "Joint-Body" of Ephesians 3:6, but most assuredly no sane, intelligent, spiritual student of the Scriptures would teach that Gentile believers today do not receive any benefits and blessings, mentioned in God's covenant with Abram, and that they have absolutely no benefits from the blood of the New Covenant. Such an argument would rule out the blessings of Hebrews 10:10 to 14, and would leave the members of Christ's Body without a Mediator, since Christ is the Mediator of the New Covenant. Hebrews 9:15.

The very next step that is taken by many of these extremists, who rule out the Lord's Supper, because of the mention of the blood in the New Covenant, is invariably to rule out Christ as a Mediator. When pressed they are compelled to relegate Paul's First Epistle to Timothy to the "Acts" Israelitish kingdom age, because Christ is our Mediator, in I Timothy 2:3 to 7. So they affirm that I Timothy cannot be considered a prison Epistle unless Paul wrote it before he received the revelation of the mystery of Colossians 1:24 to 27. But verse 7 is the Holy Spirit's answer to their folly.

"Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, and lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity." This is Paul's language in connection with "the mystery".

By the same argument these brethren have relegated the rapture of the Church, as recorded in I Thessalonians 4:13 to 18, to that same Church of the "Acts" period. Of course this

means that Paul will not receive at the rapture that he mentioned in I Thessalonians 2:19: “For what is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at His coming?” They teach that this coming (parousia) was the hope of the “Acts” Church but is not the hope of the Church of the Mystery. Therefore, Paul will not receive the crown of joy at the “parousia” for his hope was changed from the “parousia” to the blessed hope of Titus 2:13 after Acts 28:28.

This teaching of course would imply that Christ at the close of the “Acts” period abdicated as Israel’s High Priest and ascended “far above”. Ephesians 4:10.

THE LORD’S TABLE—THE FIRST DAY OF THE WEEK

We quote Acts 20:7 and Acts 2:46 and Acts 27:35

“And upon the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul preached unto them, ready to depart on the morrow; and continued his speech until midnight.”

“And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart.”

“And when he had thus spoken, he took bread, and gave thanks to God in presence of them all; and when he had broken it, he began to eat.”

This last breaking of bread was for sinners during the shipwreck.

Now the question, have we any Scriptural proof that Acts 2:46 and Acts 20:7 refer to the Lord’s Table? Are we to prove by these Scriptures that it is the Scriptural duty for members of Christ’s Body to break bread at the Lord’s Supper every Sunday?

Surely we shall not attempt to prove by Revelation 1:10 that the first day of the week Sunday, should be called “the Lord’s day”, as some Bible teachers have done, especially those who have virtually made the Lord’s Supper an obligatory Sunday morning ordinance. There is no Scriptural proof that “the first day of the week” is “the Lord’s day”. Every day is the Lord’s day with members of Christ’s Body who are seated with Him in the heavenlies and blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies.

It is a question whether or not it is Scriptural to speak of the Lord’s Supper as an ordinance. Now and then we hear some brother trying to prove that the Lord has linked water baptism and the Lord’s Supper together as the two ordinances to be practiced or observed by the members of the Lord’s Body. They quote I Corinthians 11:2.

“That ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances as I delivered to you.” The word here translated ordinances is “parakosis”, meaning “traditions”. This is an entirely different Greek word than the word “ordinances” in Colossians 2:14.

Every intelligent student of the Scriptures knows that it is not God’s will that members of the Body of Christ should be divided into clergymen and laymen. There is no Scriptural proof that a man must be an ordained “reverend” before he is Scripturally qualified to baptize a fellow-believer, or to preside when members of the Body of Christ take the bread and wine in remembrance of the death of Christ.

While God does want things done decently and in order. He certainly does not want any member of Christ’s Body to consider the Lord’s Supper as something religious. We are not a

race of servants, as were the people of God under the law. We are a race of sons. God wants us to be righteous and spiritual but He does not want us to be religious. If the Lord's Supper is a religious ordinance, it has no place in the dispensation of the grace of God.

Now note I Corinthians 11:26:

“For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew forth the Lord's death till He come.”

Now the question “how often is ‘as often’”? If the Lord's Supper is a memorial, there is no specified time or place where believers are to gather to remember the Lord. It is not a compulsory, legal ordinance that must be observed in a church building at a regular time on Sunday or any other day. The language of I Corinthians 11:26, studied in the light of the dispensation of grace, grants to the saints of God the privilege of gathering in a home, or any kind of a building, at any time saints care to gather to remember the Lord. It cannot be proved that the expression, “breaking bread”, used in several verses in Acts referred to “the Lord's Supper”.

Among the brethren that would rule the Lord's Table out of the dispensation of grace because it was a religious Jewish ordinance, associated with Israel's New Covenant, a continuation of Israel's Passover, there are some who say that even during the “Acts” period no Gentile Christian in the “Acts” Body sat at the Lord's Table; but only Jews. And they gathered at Passover time, on the fourteenth day of Israel's first month.

No man of God has produced any valid Scriptural reason for the elimination of the Lord's Table from “the dispensation of the mystery” mentioned in Ephesians 3:9. Those who have attempted to give the Scripture for their refusal to sit at the Lord's Table have gotten into rather serious trouble with other doctrines and they have done anything but rightly divide the Word of God. It has not been division but subtraction.

The Word stands, that the apostle of the Gentiles received his authority from the risen Christ, to present to members of the Body of Christ the blessed privilege of partaking of the bread and wine until the Lord Jesus shall have come.

We may be troubled and divided as to whether the members of the Body of Christ should use leavened or unleavened bread, fermented or unfermented wine, and just how often they should shew forth the Lord's death by taking the bread and wine, but before relegating this memorial to a former dispensation let us have some sane Scriptural exegesis which thus far has not been presented.