

# A DEBATE

BETWEEN

J. A. HARDING AND A. MCGARY

— ON —

THE BAPTISMAL QUESTION.

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## HARDING'S FIRST ARGUMENT.

By way of introduction, that the reader may the more readily understand the nature of these articles (for this is designed to be the first of a series) it is expedient to state that Bro. A. McGary and I have agreed to discuss the "Rebaptism Question" in a number of essays which are to be issued in pamphlet form. The question is one of great importance, upon the proper solution of which the peace and prosperity of many churches depend: and we hope to discuss it with the candor and fairness that become Christian gentlemen, earnestly praying that much good and no evil may result from our labor. He who does not desire above everything to know the truth, and to act according to the truth, is indeed a foolish man.

Bro. McGary and I most heartily agree in affirming that *some* people ought to be rebaptized. If a man has been immersed without a proper faith, or without a genuine repentance, he must be immersed again, if he would enter into the kingdom of God. There is no doubt in our minds about that. He who comes properly to baptism must come believing that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, that God has raised him from the dead; he must come sorrowing on account of his sins, being earnestly determined to turn away from them, and as far as in him lies, to make the wrongs that he has committed right; he must come acknowledging Jesus as Lord, being fully determined to follow him!

When a man so comes to baptism, I claim that his obedience is valid and good, no matter how much else he may know, or not know. No matter how great his ignorance may be, nor how much he may misunderstand the word of God, if he comes truly believing, really repenting, and confessing Jesus as Lord, he is a proper subject for baptism and church membership. Just here, if I properly understand the matter, Bro. McGary differs from me; he claims that the penitent believer must clearly and distinctly understand that baptism is in order to the remission of past sins, or his baptism will not be valid. Mark you we fully agree that baptism is in order to the remission of sins, and that it is right to so teach, but we differ as to whether a knowledge of this fact is necessary to prepare the loving penitent believer for the ordinance. I presume that Bro. McGary will fully agree with me when I tell you that many men have truly believed in Jesus Christ., have loved him ardently, have fully repented of their sins, have made a complete surrender to Jesus, and have been baptized with a resolute determination to follow him in all things," who, at the time of their baptism, did not understand baptism to be in order to the remission of sins, as we now understand it. This is true of Campbell, Scott, Stone, Smith, and of all the pioneers in our movement to lead the people back to apostolic teaching and practice. I refer to this fact I only for the purpose of making one point clear, namely, that a man may believe, repent, confess, and be baptized with a loyal heart, a loving devotion, and as firm a determination to follow Christ as a man ever had, and yet not understand the design of baptism.

Nor was it their fault that they did not understand it; for they were walking in the light rapidly as it sinned along their way, and they are the very ones who did at length find it out and who taught it to us.

Is it absolutely necessary to understand the design of a command in order to be able to obey it?

The Baptists baptize "for" the remission of sins, but they misunderstand the word "for;" some of them believe the word to mean "because of," while others of them understand it to signify, "in order to declare." They fully and freely admit that Peter spoke the truth in Acts 2: 38, they understand it enough to do what he commands, but it is clear to my mind that they do not properly understand the word "for." Does that misunderstanding make their obedience null and void? Let this supposed case illustrate: Farmer Smith shouts to his little boy John to open the gate that he may drive out. The boy, who is some distance away, understands that his father wants to drive the cows out; he loves his father and is very anxious to do his will in all things; he runs quickly, opens the gate and holds it open; the father steps into his buggy and drives out, telling John to shut the gate after him, which he promptly does. Did the boy obey his father in opening the gate? or did his misunderstanding invalidate the obedience? Suppose the father, in shouting to him, had promised him a nickel, would the boy on account of his misunderstanding have forfeited his right to the money? He did what his father told him to do; he did it lovingly; but he misunderstood the design of the obedience.

Take another case: A very indigent carpenter owes Mr. Jones a thousand dollars. Mr. Jones wants to have a house built. He calls on the carpenter, presents the plans and specifications, and agrees to forgive the debt and to pay him a thousand dollars if he will do the work. The carpenter misunderstands Mr. Jones: he thinks that he is to do the work for the debt; whereas Mr. Jones means (and his promise properly interpreted signifies) that he will give a receipt in full for the debt, and a thousand dollars besides. The carpenter, laboring under his misunderstanding, may think that he is doing a lot of work for a little money, but he is anxious to pay the debt, and so he does the work cheerfully and faithfully. He builds the

house exactly according to the plans and specifications, Would Mr. Jones be excusable from paying that thousand dollars because of the carpenter's misunderstanding? I think not. If the reader has allowed his mind to work over the matter as we have gone along, I think he will agree with me that, it is not absolutely necessary at all times to understand the design of a command, or of a contract, in order to obey or fulfill it.

Let us notice carefully that famous verse, Acts 2: 38: "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."

To these believers who are crying out to know what to do, two commands are given to be obeyed, and two promises to be enjoyed; they are commanded to repent and to be baptized, and they are promised the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit. Does Bro. McGary hold that a man can obey neither of these commands acceptably without distinctly understanding at the time that he is doing it to obtain the remission of his sins? Here are two promises: does Bro. McGary hold that a man must have a perfect conception of the nature of these promises, and that he must be baptized for the purpose of securing them in order that his baptism may be valid? If it is necessary to understand that baptism is in order to remission, is it not equally necessary to understand that it is for the purpose of securing the gift of the Holy Spirit? So it seems to me; and I would like for Bro. McGary to tell us how he understands the matter.

Concerning the meaning the phrase, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," there is a number of interpretations among the disciples; and if one must understand what obedience to a command is designed to secure in order to be able to obey it, then those among us who understand that phrase better now than we did at the time of our baptism ought to be rebap-

tized; for though we may have understood the first promise very well, it is certain we did not understand the second. I confess that I have a much clearer and more correct understanding of the words, "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," now than I had at the time of my baptism. Does Bro. McGary think that I ought therefore to be rebaptized? If not, why not?

Let us study another verse of the Sacred Oracles: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."—Mark 10: 16. This, as the reader doubtless knows, is a quotation from Mark's record of the Commission. Jesus tells his apostles to go into all the world and to preach the gospel to every creature, and he adds, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." That is, he that believes the gospel and is baptized shall be saved. What is the gospel that men are to believe that they may come into the church of God, and may thus be saved? Let Paul answer the question. He went to Corinth when there was no church there; he preached the gospel; and it is said that "many of the Corinthians hearing, believed, and were baptized." (See Acts 18: 8). That, is, they heard the gospel, believed the gospel, and were baptized, and were thus saved. Now that we may know what the gospel is that Paul preached, and what these people believed to the saving of their souls, we turn to a letter that he wrote to them a number of years afterwards. We turn to the first epistle to the Corinthians, chapter 15, and read thus: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. 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: and that he was seen of



Cephas, then of the twelve: after that, he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep: after that, he was seen of James; then of all the apostles, And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time."

Here we learn what is the gospel that Paul preached, that the Corinthians believed, and by which they were saved. Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; he was buried; he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures; and he was then seen by many reliable witnesses. Paul preached this, they believed it, and upon this faith they were baptized. The facts to be believed are the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; or, as the resurrection necessarily presupposes the death and burial, the fact to be believed is, that God raised Jesus from the dead. Hence Paul said: "It thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, [Jesus *as* Lord, R. V.) and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shall be saved." – Rom. 10: 9.

It cannot be too deeply impressed upon the mind that Christ saves us; all the virtue is in him. Christianity consists in believing in, loving and following Christ. He who believes in him, who so believes in him as to love him and to be willing to follow him, is ready to be baptized. And many such have been baptized who did not understand at the time the force of the words, "for the remissions of sins;" and many are being baptized now by Bro. McGary, myself and our co-workers, who do not fully understand the meaning of the promise, "And ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost;" but I am joyful in the belief that, if we love him and follow him, if we seek diligently for the light and walk in it as it shines along our way, he will not fail to fulfill to us any of his exceeding great and precious promises because of our misunderstanding of them. It is ours to hear, to love and to obey; it is his to bless.

J. A. HARDING.

### McGARY'S FIRST REPLY.

I, too, desire this discussion to be characterized by fairness and candor, each of us striving to elicit truth and uphold the majesty and power of God as revealed in the gospel of His Son. Indeed, the question is important, not only as it may affect the "peace and prosperity of churches," but it strikes right down at the "root" of a "plant not planted by our heavenly Father," but which is being cultivated in the "vineyard" of His Son; it lies right athwart the threshold of the Kingdom of God!

It is always best to have clearly defined propositions in discussing, so as to economize time and space and furnish something for the mind of the reader or hearer to hold on to. I desired this discussion to proceed on this logical principle, but Bro. Harding has seen proper to lead out upon another, and I must not grumble, but must proceed to overhaul what he has adduced to see what headway he has made. Reader, you will see very readily that the issue is: "Does the Lord authorize the immersion of such persons as do not know for what He has commanded them to go 'down into the water?'" You will see that Bro. Harding is writing to show that He does, and that I am writing to test his arguments to see if they are conclusive. So, after all it need not matter much that he has not formulated a specific proposition. I shall not write to convince Bro. Harding that he is wrong, for, although I consider him a good man, I expect him

to be too much taken up with fortifying his very untenable position to be very susceptible to conviction—but in calmer moments I should not be surprised if he should read this discussion and see his mistake.

He says that we agree that "*some* people ought to be rebaptized." And he says that those that ought to be rebaptized are; those who have been immersed' without a proper faith, or without a genuine repentance," Now, he is right here, in saying we agree on this. And right here we come upon our issue again. He says Baptists and other immersed sectarians had this "proper faith" when they were immersed; but I deny it! This is what we are writing about! I have carefully weighed his whole article and the only real point he has tried to make is, that the gospel in its entirety—wholly and exclusively—consists of the three facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. Now the only work he has left for me to do, that is, absolutely necessary for me to do is, to show that he is mistaken at this point, and I will throw him back of all else he has said and wipe it all out like wiping out a mark in the sand—but I may do more than this, I think I shall; for I don't want to appear at all reticent in discussing with this brother I have admired so much.

Now if the three facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ fill the gospel measure full, that is, if they constitute the whole gospel, then I must admit that these Baptists and other immersed sectarians had a "proper faith" when they were immersed. But how does Bro. Harding prove that these three facts thus constitute the gospel? He does so by going to I Cor. 15: 1-4, where Paul says: "Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; by which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also

received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scripture; and that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the Scriptures," etc. MacKnight translates the 3rd verse thus: "For I delivered to you among the first things, what also I received, FIRST, That Christ died our sins, according to the Scriptures; and that he was buried," etc. I believe Bro. Harding will acknowledge this to be a better translation of that verse. But be this as it may, how can he suppose Paul to be here defining and limiting the gospel of Christ to these three facts? It is perfectly natural and consonant with reason and revelation to deliver to the Corinthians and every one else, first of all, these gospel facts, because they constitute the *foundation* of faith. Without a full and free acceptance of these fundamental or foundation facts—there can be no beginning of faith. But with these accepted in the heart the foundation of faith, and Christian life and character is laid. But does this foundation of faith which must first of all be laid, constitute the whole gospel? Does the laying of the foundation of a house constitute a perfect and complete house? There cannot possibly be a house built, until, first of all, the foundation is laid; but if the carpenter lays the foundation and leaves, he leaves his work undone, only partly done. So of the man who goes out to preach the gospel, if he tells the three facts and leaves, he leaves his work incomplete, only partly done. It is a reckless, dangerous, but common thing, for men to so construe one statement of Scripture as to bring it into conflict with some other passage. This is why Bro. Harding's construction of 1 Cor., 15: 1-4, is so unreasonable and repugnant to the common sense of any one who reads one passage in the light of another.

Now Paul says that, "the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming lire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord

Jesus Christ."—2 Thes. 1: 7-8. Now Bro. Harding must show us how to obey a fact before he can expect us to accent his construction of 1 Cor. 15: 1-4. For If he is right in his construction of this Scripture, then Paul informs us, through his Thessalonian letter, that those who do not obey these three facts will he destroyed. So then, the only way to be saved, if Bro. Harding is right, is to learn how to obey facts! Now I leave this point for the present, till he tells us how to obey a fact! Do tell us, my brother, "else we perish." Will he try to tell sensible people how to obey a fact? I will not believe it till I see him make the attempt, for I believe he is too candid to attempt so foolish a thing! But he must do this, or yield his construction on this passage in Corinthians; and when he yields this, his rope of sand snaps in two! I boldly challenge him to settle this difficulty, I have much more to urge against this construction of his, but will wait for him to attend to these difficulties.

He has no proper place for Campbell, Stone, Scott and Smith in this discussion. We intend to measure by the divine "measuring reed," and not by human standards however great they may be. But I deny what he says of Bro. Campbell's ignorance on the design of baptism. Let him prove it. He says these renowned dead were all ignorant of the design of baptism, and that their ignorance was not their fault! Well, whose fault was it, was it God's? Surely he will not deny that they all had unmolested access to God's word, and he knows that it is so plain that even "a fool snail not err therein." Let him tell us, since he would bring them in, whose fault it was that they did not understand! Don't forget this! Whose fault was it that many pious, unimmersed magnates, to whom I might cite you, died without understanding the design or the "mode" of baptism? Give us some light all along here since you have thrust these matters upon us.

He says he does not doubt that I will admit that many men have made a complete surrender to Jesus, who did not know the design of baptism. Here you are mistaken, my brother, for I know no way to make a complete surrender to Jesus but by obeying the gospel. Do you?

He says, "we fully agree that baptism is in order to the remission of sins, and that it is right to so teach." Yes, we do agree here; but I don't believe it is right for Bro. Harding to so teach, holding the view that it is not necessary that people shall understand it! Now let him give us one good, plausible reason why he or any one else should teach that which the people need not understand? Don't forget this, for right here I expect to twist your rope of sand in two again!

You are wrong, my brother, about there being two commands and two promises in that "famous verse, Acts 2: 38"— please tell us why you call it a "famous verse?" for sectarians talk that way when that verse gives them trouble— though I am not yet prepared to believe you allude to it in that same spirit; but I desire your explanation. There are two commands, and one promise in this verse. The two commands are, "repent, and be baptized for the remission of sins." The promise is the gift of the Holy Spirit. No, I do not believe it is necessary to understand how this gift is to be received in order to be baptized. But it ought to be stated just as Peter stated it. You know Paul "rebaptized" some who had not heard of there being any Holy Spirit. I do not suppose you need to be "rebaptized," but if you really need my advice, state your case fully and I will try to aid you all I can to determine whether you ought to or not.

In conclusion, we must notice his illustrations. First we find him bringing up farmer Smith and his son John, and a bunch of cattle to help him get the Baptists into the kingdom. I will tell you, my brother, the great trouble with this illustration; and I find the same one in *every* example you

brethren brings up to represent your teaching. They are like your teaching on this question — too loose.

Now you have Mr. Smith and John too far apart. You must bring them close enough together for John to be able to hear all his father says, before it will suit to illustrate the case of Peter and the three thousand. And when you get them close up together, then you must make John turn his attention away from his father, and while he is shouting to him, have some one off near by shouting a contradiction to what Mr. Smith is saying, and let John give his attention to this other fellow instead of to his father. Then John will pretty fairly represent the Baptists. Then if he lets the cows out while his father is in good hearing reach of him and telling him to open the gate for him to drive out, farmer Smith will deal fairly with him if he gives him a good whipping. I think the reader can see the point.

Now I will examine the case of Mr. Jones and your indigent carpenter, but I had much rather follow the Carpenter of Nazareth, for he never misleads us. I disagree with you about this case. I say, if that carpenter should go before a court of justice and state his understanding of the case, the court would not allow him any more than he understood he was working for; but however this may be, the case is too loose to bring up to illustrate the gospel principle. The plans and specifications of the Carpenter of Nazareth are plain and simple, and leave no room for such misunderstandings as you get up in this case. He says,, "hear;" and he says, "take heed what you hear." We are to "know the truth and the truth makes tree."

A. McGARY.

## HARDING'S SECOND ARGUMENT.

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Bro. McGary seems to intimate that I am responsible for our not having before us a clearly defined proposition. This is a mistake. I was willing to affirm that he who believes that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, who has repented of his sins, and who has confessed Jesus as Lord, is a fit subject for baptism. Or, I was willing to deny that it is absolutely necessary to understand the design of baptism in order to make the baptism valid. Or, I was willing to conduct the discussion as we are now doing. Bro. McGary chose this way; and I am very well satisfied with it. I knew well that there is but one point between us, on this rebaptism question, of vital importance, and that we would be sure to make that point stand out in a clear-cut, sharply defined way. It is brought out in these words, Is it absolutely necessary to understand the design of a command in order to be able to obey it? Bro. McGary replies, yes, I say, no. He contends that if a man does not understand at the time of his baptism, that baptism is in order to the remission of past sins, the baptism is not valid, the man is not "born again;" he is still in the world, in his sins. I claim that if a man believes that God raised Jesus from the dead, if he loves Jesus, confesses him as his Lord (being a genuine penitent), and is immersed because he knows the Lord has commanded him to be, his baptism is valid. I claim that in Acts 2: 38 there are two com-



mands and two promises: sinners are told to repent and be baptized; and they are promised the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Ghost. I asked Bro. McGary, if the sinner must have a clear and full understanding of both of these promises before he can obey either of these commands. He thinks not. He thinks that a man's misunderstanding of "the gift of the Holy Ghost" would not invalidate his baptism. But he claims that "for the remission of sins" is not a promise. If I can show that it is, my cause is gained, himself being the judge. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The "shall be saved" means saved from past sins; to this all of us agree, Bro. McGary with the rest of us. Hence Jesus' words, "shall be saved," are exactly equivalent in meaning to Peter's words, "for the remission of sins." But it is perfectly clear that the words of Jesus, "shall be saved," express a promise. To the man that believes the gospel and is baptized Jesus promises salvation from his past sins. Jesus came to give salvation to man; and he promises to give it

to all who hear and obey him. If the words, "shall be saved" express a promise, then it follows beyond a doubt that the equivalent expression, "for the remission of sins," does also, and my case is made out.

That this point may stand out in a still clearer light, I ask the reader to compare Peter's instructions to sinners in Acts 2: 38, with his instructions given to the same class in his next discourse Acts 3: 19. The former verse reads thus: "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." The latter, (in the revised version), thus: "Repent ye therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that so, there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord." Notice the parallelism in the two passages; in both cases he says "repent;" where he says "be baptized" in the one

case, he says "turn again" in the other; where he says "for the remission of sins" in the one case, he says "that your sins may be blotted out" in the other; where he says "and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" in the one case, he says "that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord" in the other. Who can doubt that the blotting out of sins, and the seasons of refreshing, are two promises to those who would repent and turn to the Lord? Both of them introduced by the same word, "that," ("that your sins may be blotted out," and, "that so there may come seasons of refreshing"). The discussion now stands thus: Bro. McGary has admitted that it is not necessary to understand the promise in order to be able to obey the command upon which it is conditioned; I have shown that salvation from sin ("for the remission of sins") is a promise; hence it follows that baptism may be valid without a full and complete understanding of its design, according to Bro. McG. himself.

Can a man obey a fact? inquires Bro. McGary. Certainly not. Paul represents the Roman Christians as having obeyed the "form of doctrine." The doctrine was the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; they obeyed the form of it; that is, they died to the love and practice of sin when they believed, then they were buried in baptism and raised to walk in a new life, and then Jesus gave them what he had promised, the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

With regard to my illustration concerning Mr. Smith and his son John, Bro. McGary says I have them too far apart. He thinks they should be near together, with some other parties shouting to John at the same time that his father is. Well, suppose John is trying with all of his might to hear his father; suppose he is turning away from these other people, because he loves his father and is bent on doing his will; suppose he does fully understand what his father wants him to do, and does do it.

exactly; but suppose these other people make such a fuss, that he fails to understand the design of the obedience; would he on account of that misunderstanding forfeit his right to the nickel promised? Would his father be justified in saying, "John, I told you to open the gate that I might drive out, and I promised to give you a nickel if you would do it. You did open the gate and I did drive out in my buggy; *but you thought I intended to drive the cattle out*, therefore I inn under no obligation to give you the money and I wont do it. Could not John answer, "Father, I love you; I have done what you told me to do; I desire above all things to do what you want me to do; but those people were making such a fuss (contrary to my will) that I failed to understand the design of the obedience." Under such circumstances would not the father be inexcusable if he withheld the blessing? So it seems to me. Now this exactly illustrates the case of Campbell, Smith. Stone, Scott and of nearly all of the first workers in our effort to return to the apostolic order. They loved Jesus, they were bent on obeying him at all hazards, they did obey him exactly (they believed, they repented, they confessed, they were immersed in his name), but there was such a Babel of noises arising from the theological world (from which they were running as fast as they could go), that they did not fully understand the design of baptism until years after they had obeyed the command. Like Mr. Smith's boy John, they did what the Father told them to do, they did it lovingly, being desirous above all things to do his will. It was not God's fault that they did not fully understand at once; it was not their fault; it was the fault of those who had taught them all of their lives; but they had begun to see the light, and they were walking in it as fast as they could go.

Yes, as Bro. McGary quotes, the way is plain, so plain that even wayfaring men though fools "shall not err therein." Mark you, the Scripture says

*"shall not err therein"* and we learn in Matt. 7: 15 - 27, that the way consists in hearing what Jesus says and in doing what he tells us. When any man takes the Bible, studies it diligently with the supreme desire of knowing his duty that he may do it, when he is prompt to obey as soon as he understands, I claim that he will be sure to find out his duty day by day, and hour by hour; he will not be mistaken in it; the prophecy will be fulfilled, he *"shall not err therein."* Error comes in when we turn aside from the word of God to find something that will do just as well, or, when we begin to hunt some better way of carrying out the Lord's Appointments than the way that he gave us.

But our pioneers did not err in this respect; they turned resolutely from all human leaders to the blessed word of God; they read it with an eager devotion; as they learned their duty, they did it, often making sacrifices to do it that we would consider appalling. Did they err in the way? Then the prophecy of Isaiah failed; they *"shall not err therein,"* he said. No, no; with all their misunderstandings, and in spite of the fog that false teaching had brought around them, they were doing their duty day by day; they did not lose the way. I would be pleased if Bro. McGary will tell us, if he thinks they did err in the way, what Isaiah meant? The man who desires above all things to serve the Lord can find out from day to day what he ought to do, although he may be a long time in finding out the meaning of all of the precious promises of the Master.

Bro. McGary denies that Campbell was ignorant of the design of baptism when he was baptized. He demands that I shall prove it. Well, here is the proof: Campbell was baptized Juno 12, 1812. See *Memoirs of Alexander Campbell*, vol. 1, p. 396. Eleven years later he debated with the Presbyterian, Mr. McCalla. In that debate he expressed his convictions on the design of baptism thus: "Paul's sins were *really pardoned* when he be-

lieved, yet he had no solemn pledge of the fact, no *formal* acquittal, no *formal* purgation of his sins until he washed them away in the water of baptism." See *Memoirs*, vol. 2, p. 89. So Campbell, as late as 1823, held to the genuine Baptist notion that the *real pardon* is reached as soon as one believes. but that the *formal* declaration of the fact is set forth in baptism. Walter Scott opened up this great question some years later. See *Memoirs*, vol.2, chap. 6. Here in Alexander Campbell we have a man who loved the word of God, who studied it as hardly another man has ever done, who had powers of understanding that are vouch-safed to few mortals, who obeyed it scrupulously and punctiliously, but who did not have a clear understanding of its design till fifteen or sixteen years alter his baptism. Did that want of understanding invalidate the baptism? Then this man erred in the way, notwithstanding the prophet said, even the fools "shall not err therein." And not only did Campbell thus err, but so did all of his coadjutors for fifteen years. Hear in mind that I refer to this great and good man not as an authority in religion, but simply to show that an honest, earnest, believing, loving, penitent man may come confessing Jesus as Lord, and desiring to be baptized because he understands that his Lord requires it, without understanding that baptism is. in order to the remission of past sins. I rotor to Campbell especially because the character of the man, and the history of his work are well known. As to the "unimmersed magnates" to whom Bro. McGary refers, the trouble with them is, they did not obey the Lord. Had they walked in the light as rapidly as it shone along their way, as our pioneers did, they would not have erred in the way— they would have been saved. They did not obey the "form of doctrine," and hence no man has scriptural warrant for saying that they were made "free from sin." Bro. McGary wants to know why I teach that

baptism is for the remission of sins. I answer, because It is the truth. Why does he teach that the Holy Spirit is promised to the baptized believer? I suppose for the same reason, because it is the truth. All truth is important and should be taught; but it does not follow that it is necessary to understand it all to be prepared for baptism, or for heaven; the man who understands enough *to do* what the Lord says do, if he walks up to the light that he has, builds his house upon the rock, and will certainly be saved.

In the carpenter illustration, the question is not as to what the court would allow the workman; no, it is this: Would the gentleman be excusable from paying what he had contracted to pay, because the workman did not fully understand how much it was?

J. A. HARDING.

**McGARY'S SECOND REPLY.**

I am sorry to see so much more of Campbell and other uninspired men than there is of Christ and his apostles, in Bro. Harding's article. He says he does not refer to Campbell as authority in religion; but he is mistaken, for the reader will clearly see that he is given as an example of how a man may come short of the gospel and yet he saved. Again, it helps to make sympathy for his side of this question.

To "err in the way" would be to err while doing just what God commands to be done and for the very purpose He says do it. This can't be done! But men err when they do otherwise. Bro. Harding seems to think the way these pioneers did was "in the way" *because it is* the way they did. Whoever has erred, has erred in being *out* of "the way"—doing the commandments of men. As Bro. Harding says: "Error comes in when we turn aside from the word of God to find something that will do just as well"—as Bro. Harding does when he "turns aside from the word of God" and recognizes, as scripturally baptized, persons who were baptized before they were taught, and who stated that God for Christ's sake had pardoned their sins by an abstract operation of the Spirit. There was no more excuse for these "pioneers" being led astray by the "Babel of noises" than there was and is for other men – and, perhaps, not as much; for they were all men of giant minds. But we did not start out to

help Bro. Harding preach the funeral of these "pioneers"—don't believe in funeral preaching, anyway. I do not believe any man admires the character, life and work of Alexander Campbell more than I do; but I cannot consent for him to become our religion\* standard.

It seems that I really have more confidence in Bro. Campbell's sincerity than Bro. Harding has. To show this and to refute his statement that, Bro. Campbell depended upon a baptism in which he was ignorant of the design of the ordinance, I submit the following words from Bro. Campbell: "I had thought that in my Essays on Immersion this point was fully settled. Every single blessing, and all blessings collectively, appertaining to salvation, flow to us from the sacrifice of Jesus the Son of God. The value and efficacy of his sacrifice is the very document itself which constitutes the burthen of the testimony. Belief of this testimony is what impels us into the water. Knowing that the efficacy of this blood is to be communicated to our consciences in the way which God has pleased to appoint, we stagger not at the promise of God,' but flee to the sacred ordinance which brings the blood of Christ in contact with our consciences. Without knowing and believing this, immersion is as empty as a blasted nut. The shell is there, but the kernel is wanting."—*Christian Baptist*, p. 521. Again: "In former dispensations, and in the present, two things are immutable as respects the preparation for a change of state, while the act by which that change is formerly consummated is not necessarily immutable. Thus, in *reference to actual transgression, faith and repentance, in all dispensations of religion, were necessary to forgiveness, justification, sanctification, adoption, salvation.* In one word, God cannot forgive an impenitent and unbelieving transgressor. But whether this or that act shall consummate a change of state, as respects man's relations to the moral universe—whether that act shall be circumcision, ani-



mal sacrifice, baptism, confession, prayer, etc., is not from any necessity, either in the divine or human nature, immutable, it has been changed; *but faith in God's appointments*, and repentance for past transgressions, *are now, always were, and evermore shall be necessary to forgiveness.*"—*Christian System*. pp. 62-63. (Italics mine.)

Now then, if Bro. Campbell did not understand the design of baptism when he was baptized by Mr. Luce, then to have been a sincere man in what he has here and elsewhere taught, he *must* have been reimmersed after he learned the true design of the ordinance. Bro. Harding, was he a sincere man? I believe he was.

When you say I asked you why you teach that baptism is for the remission of sins, you only state *part* of my question. I asked, why you teach it, *if it is not necessary that people shall understand it!* You have not and *cannot* give a good reason why you do. You are mistaken when you say that I said it is not necessary that people shall understand that they are to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. I said it is not necessary that they shall understand *how* they receive it—quite a difference, you see; but it serves you some, in giving you something to run off after and draw the mind away from the real question.

Again, I admit that salvation from sin as a promise is *implied* in Arts 2: 38; but the command to be baptized *for the* remission of sins is *expressed*. It is a most awkward sentence, if it intends to *express* remission of sins as a *promise*. If this were the intention, how much more natural and intelligible it would have been to have said: Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ and ye shall receive the remission of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit—this is exactly your idea of it!

Neither do I deny that, the promise of salvation from past sins, is in many passages the *expressed* idea; but in all such passages the command to be baptized *for the remission of sins* is implied, so

that none are *promised* the remission of sins save those who "obey from the heart the form of doctrine," or the gospel—those who gladly receive the word of the apostles, in which they are taught to be baptized for the remission of sins.

As you seem to think so strange of my position, and, as you regard Bro. Campbell's views so highly; and as the words I shall give from Bro. Campbell are so perfectly in harmony with my position, and with the word of truth, I submit the following from him for your consideration: "In the first place, then, no one is commanded to be baptized *for anything* else; and no one is ever said to have been baptized *for anything* else, than for the remission of sins. This is a very important fact, and worthy of much reflection."—*Campbell on Baptism*, p. 252.

You say it was not God's fault, nor their fault that these "pioneers" were not baptized for the remission of sins. You say the fault was in the false teachers. But I say it was also their own fault, if they were not baptized with an understanding of the design of the ordinance. I, like you, say: "*When any man takes the Bible, studies it diligently with the supreme desire of knowing his duty that he may do it, when he is prompt to obey as soon as he understands, I claim that he will be sure to find out his duty day by day and hour by hour; he will not be mistaken in it,*"

So the only reason why these "pioneers" and others did not understand the doctrine of baptism for the remission of sins, is, because they failed to study the Bible as they should; and they failed to heed the injunction, "Take heed what ye hear." This is why John Smith's case is not in point, but flies so wide of the mark! You have John too far off from Mr. Smith. God's word rises above all of the "fuss of these other people," sufficiently to be *distinctly* heard above them all, with the man who studies it "diligently," as you say. So Mr. Smith's and John's case, in this question, is not worth to

you, the "nickel" Mr. Smith promised John. And the same is true of your other example. I could easily show again how far they miss the mark, but I think the reader can see.

Bro. Harding answers my question, as to whether or not a fact can be obeyed, thus: "Certainly not," Then, the death, burial and resurrection of Christ do not constitute the whole gospel; they are *three* facts, and if *one* fact can't be obeyed, of course *three* can't. I felt confident that Bro. Harding was a man of too much integrity to try to hold that facts can be obeyed. But when he makes this admission he virtually yields the point; for he had as well attempt to walk through mid air, with nothing but atmosphere to step upon, as to try to defend his position when he admits that, these three facts do not constitute the whole gospel; and he virtually admits this when he admits that facts can't be obeyed; for Paul teaches that the gospel *must* be obeyed! But he tries to hang on a little by saying: "The doctrine was the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus; they obeyed the form of it; that is, they died to the love and practice of sin, (where does the Bible say this?) then they were buried in baptism and raised to walk in a new life." But to speak of the doctrine, is but to speak of the gospel in a different form of words, that's all! So in the gospel, or doctrine of Christ, there are facts, commands and promises; and facts *cannot* be obeyed whether we speak of them as being in the gospel or in the doctrine of Christ. Commands can be obeyed. So it was in obeying the commands that the Romans "obeyed the form of doctrine." In obeying these commands they did that which represented death, burial and resurrection. But if I had the space, just here I could give him no little trouble to fit Baptist conversion to this "form" or mould. Is it not a fact that they will not "bury" their converts till they have been knocked in the *head* at the mourner's bench, and then rubbed and patted and pounded

to life again? Do they not wait till they find they are most *buoyantly* alive before they will "bury them?" So they kill them with the wrong implement—"orthodox" lightning—and bury them when they come to life and get well of it; and Bro. Harding thinks they have been run through the apostolic mould!

But now I am done discussing the "pioneers," and done following Bro. Harding away upon irrelevant grounds. The remaining two arguments I have will be spent at the real issue. Bro. Harding says the issue is: "Is It absolutely necessary to understand the design of a command in order to be able to obey it?" If I felt disposed to conduct this discussion upon such illogical grounds, I would say, not when the command is to "open a gate;" for when a gate is opened, no matter if it were opened to let a mouse through, if an elephant should pass through, or *vice versa*, the gate would be opened all the same; or if it were opened to let a man and buggy through, and a bunch of cattle should go through, it would not change the fact. But not so with God's commands that appeal to the heart and understanding; for they are to be "obeyed from the heart." How about eating the bread that represents the body of Christ, and drinking the wine that represents his blood, "is it absolutely necessary to understand" the design here? Is it like opening a gate for a man and buggy to pass out?

Bro. Harding has not stated the issue logically; but I will, and he *can't help seeing* it! He wants to start me around his illogical circle and then fall in behind me and tread upon my heels, instead of "facing the music." I will conclude this article by stating the real issue, and just how it comes up, in such a way that no unbiased mind can fail to see that the burden of proof devolves upon Bro. Harding:

Christ sent his apostles to *teach* and baptize. They went and did as they were bidden, being

guided by the Holy Spirit. We find that, they taught persons to be baptized for the remission of sins; and they baptized those who "gladly received their word, and confessed with the mouth the Lord Jesus"—made "the good confession." Now I teach the same things they taught, and baptize the same class of persons they baptized. And Bro. Harding *cannot* deny that this is right. So here, there is no room for discussion between us. I *will not go beyond the record*, but Bro. Harding does, and says that, those who believe that Jesus is the Christ but have not been taught what the apostles taught about the remission of sins and baptism, and who have not made "the good confession," may also be baptized. This I deny, and call for the proof. Who now is responsible for the proof? I do not fear that the fair reader will be misled.

I accepted this discussion to see if I could not force Bro. Harding to give us some proof for his teaching; and I will do it from now on, or the reader shall see that he will not "come up to the scratch." If I have written more than you have, make up for it in your next.

A. McGARY.

### HARDING'S THIRD ARGUMENT.

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Bro. McGary expresses his sorrow that there is so much more of Campbell and other uninspired men in my speech than there is of Christ; he then proceeds to write up his reply, *and he says more of Campbell and the pioneers than I did*. He charges me with referring to Campbell as an authority in religion, although I have positively denied doing this, and have explained time and again that I referred to him simply to illustrate this fact, namely, that a man may believe, repent, confess and be baptized with a loyal heart and as firm a determination to follow Christ as any man ever had, and yet not understand the design of baptism. He was an amazingly diligent student of the word, too; and he believed every word that ever came from the lips of inspiration; *but he did not understand them all*. He believed that baptism was "for the remission of sins," but he did not understand the force of the word "for;" like the Baptists of today, he thought that in baptism there was a "formal purgation" of that which had already been "really pardoned." He had this idea when he debated with Mr. MaCalla in 1823, but even this much was then new. He says: "It was with much hesitation I presented this view of the subject at that time, because of its perfect novelty."—*Christian Baptist*, p. 401, Then he continues on the same page thus: "But having thought still more closely upon this subject, and having been

necessarily called to consider it more fully as an essential part of the Christian religion, I am still better prepared to develop its import, and to establish its utility and value in the Christian religion." These words Campbell wrote in 1828 in the first of the series of essays entitled, "*Ancient Gospel*." This was more than fifteen years after his baptism, and about five years after the debate with MacCalla. Bro. McGary's quotations from him are of still later date, the first one of them having been written in 1829.

Bro. McGary thinks if Campbell was a sincere man he was rebaptized; and he plainly intimates that he believes Campbell was sincere, and was reimmersed. If so, it was done in secret, and was studiously kept from the world; no announcement of it was ever made in any way. I was educated at Bethany, and often visited his home, but never heard a word of such a thing. In fact no such thing ever occurred. Bro. Campbell was no cowardly poltroon. If he had thought it necessary to be reimmersed himself, he would have taught the people he had been misleading during all these years that they also should be reimmersed. Bro. McGary thinks to have been consistent he should have been: but Campbell did not think so. Moreover it does not matter to me what his teaching requires; I am not trying to follow his teaching; he is no authority with me; I introduced him simply to illustrate a single point, and that point now stands out clearly before you: A man may love Jesus, believing that he came up from the grave by the power of God: he may be a true penitent, being determined to follow Christ if need be even unto death; he may be a diligent student of the Bible, having far greater powers of mind, and a far better education, than either Bro. McGary or myself; he may come to baptism confessing Jesus as Lord; and he may be baptized "for the remission of sins," without properly understanding the meaning of "for" in that connection. All this was

true of Alexander Campbell. He believed and loved; and he repented and confessed; he was baptized believing every word that overcame from inspired lips to be true; but he did not understand them all. If he erred in the way on this account, then he did it for fifteen years, being all of the time a diligent student of the Bible, a faithful believer in the truthfulness of every word of it, and a most conscientious performer of its commands.

Bro. McGary admits that it is not necessary to understand a promise in order to be able to obey the command upon which it is predicated. He admits that "shall be saved" expresses a promise. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." The thing to be believed is that God hath raised Christ from the dead, (see Rom. 10:9); and the word, "baptized," means immersed. "Shall be saved" means "shall be forgiven." Hence we have this statement: He that believeth that God raised Jesus from the dead and is immersed, shall be forgiven. We are taught that this faith is with the heart; and hence it includes repentance; and, as the administrator is to baptize believers only, the confession is necessarily implied.

From what has been said, we can now show in the clearest and most satisfactory way, what the gospel is that we are to believe in order to be saved. Jesus says, "Preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." "He that believeth," that is, he that believeth the gospel which they were to preach. As we have shown, Paul says he preached the gospel to the Corinthians, and that by it they were saved unless they had believed in vain; he explains that he preached unto them, "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;" and that he was then seen by many reliable witnesses, (see 1 Cor. 15: 1-8). Now that these facts, viz: Christ's death for



our sins, his burial and resurrection according to the Scriptures, constitute the gospel which we are to believe in order to be saved, is made perfectly clear to my mind by this further statement of Paul: "If thou shalt confess with the mouth the Lord Jesus, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved," Rom. 10: 9. In one place he says he preached the gospel, namely, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and that the people were saved by it, unless they believed in vain; and in another, he explains that the thing to be believed in order that one may be saved is, that God hath raised Jesus from the dead, of course the resurrection necessarily implies the death and burial, and hence to believe the one is to believe the three. The Christian's creed, therefore, is expressed in the words, "God hath raised Jesus from the dead." He who believes this creed with the heart will follow Jesus, and will thus be saved.

But the question naturally arises, if remission is a promise, why did Peter say, repent, and be baptized "for the remission of sins"? Why did he not rather say: "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, *and ye shall receive* the remission of sins," as Bro. McGary suggests? I reply that Peter's answer to the people grew out of the nature of the case; they were tilled with horror and consternation; they had killed the Son of God; they did not know that there WAS any chance for the remission of their sins; they did not know whether there was any possibility of mitigating the wrath that they dreaded or not; but in their terror and darkness, it was quite natural for them to cry out, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" And it was quite natural for Peter to tell them that repentance and baptism were appointed unto them for the remission of their sins, and that then they should receive that glorious gift of which Joel had spoken. In his next speech the same conditions did not surround him, and in-

stead of saving, "for the remission of sins," he said, "that your sins may be blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing front the presence of the Lord."—Acts 3: 19. R. V.

Now, mark you, I hold that a man must believe that every word that came by inspiration is true; that is involved in believing that Christ arose from the dead; a man cannot believe the latter fact without believing the former; if Christ arose, every word that he spoke is true; and his apostles were guided by the Spirit into "all truth," (see John 16: 8), and hence all that they spoke is true. But while all believers in Christ believe also in the truthfulness of every inspired word, none of us understand all of those words. Paul says, "And so all Israel shall be saved." I believe that as firmly as I believe any statement of the Bible, but I am by no means certain that I understand it.

And so every honest man that is immersed believes that what Peter said in Acts 2: 38 is true; but many of them do not understand it. Alexander Campbell believed it as truly before he understood it, as he did afterwards; and he was immersed to secure the remission of sins, but he did not know it at the time; he thought he had been already pardoned; he found out better afterwards.

I will here ask Bro. McGary a question. I think it brings out the exact point of difference between us. Suppose a man were to come to me and say, "I believe with my heart that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God—that he came up from the grave by the power of God; I am sorry for my sins, and am determined by God's grace to turn away from them; I want to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, that I may receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." The man is terribly in earnest; there is no doubt about that. I immerse him. He goes on his way. Like Campbell and Scott and Smith, he proves to be one of the most faithful and diligent servants of the Lord that the world ever saw. But I afterwards learn

**McGARY'S THIRD REPLY.**

I am sorry Bro. Harding thinks I am not disposed to treat him as a Christian, when I say that he brings Bro. Campbell in as authority, and when I say he wants to draw the reader away from the issue. I do esteem him a Christian, and had I the space feel just now like expatiating upon my great confidence in and respect for him as a true and fearless disciple of Christ, as far as he sees the truth. But, I see that, when he has a false position to defend he, too, labors under the same foibles of the flesh that always trammel and lead astray other poor, weak sons of Adam who labor under like circumstances. And I have become too well acquainted with Bro. Harding's candid and pointed style of discussing, when he is showing up the unauthorized practices of those who go beyond the word of God, to suppose that he desires me to sugar-coat what I say to him in this discussion, or to fear that he will be offended at me after this discussion is over.

Bro. Harding says I am saying more about Bro. Campbell than he does. I think the reader will see he is mistaken about this. But who introduced Bro. Campbell in this discussion? I tried to get him to leave Bro. Campbell out, but he would not. I do not doubt that he is now sorry he did not take my advice. But since he could not discuss this question without taking up about one-third of his space with Bro. Campbell and the pioneers, and

has forced an issue on me about Bro. Campbell, I must conclude, on that point, with a few words more from the pen of that great man. In "Campbell on Baptism," pp. 18-19, Bro. Campbell quotes the confession made by Peter, as recorded in Matt. 10:16. Upon *this* confession, Bro. Campbell says: "*This confession must be made by every applicant for Christian baptism in order to his being constitutionally builded upon the divine foundation.*" [italics mine.] Do those taught and baptized by the Baptists or other denominations make this confession? To ask the question is equivalent to answering it. The man who will say they do will have to turn quibbler, which I do not think Bro. 11. is ready to do. Well, if they do not make this confession, and these words by Bro. Campbell are true, they are not "constitutionally builded on the divine foundation." Then, if Bro. Campbell *did* not make it before his baptism, he was not, and *could not have been* builded on the divine foundation, till he was immersed upon just such a confession. And if he or others received those baptized under so-called "orthodox" teaching, without immersing them upon just such a confession, they received those who were not constitutionally builded upon the divine foundation. Those who accept and act upon this teaching of Bro. Campbell on the confession, act by divine authority, because this teaching is in harmony with God's word. And, those who refuse to follow Bro. Campbell's practice of receiving such persons as have not made this confession, act wisely and consistently and follow God, while those who do follow Bro. Campbell's practice turn away from following God and follow Alexander Campbell; for he is the highest authority for the practice!

But Bro. Harding intimates in his last argument that, the confession is merely to satisfy the administrator. I prefer to take Paul on that point, and he says: "With the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth *confession* is

made *unto salvation*."—Rom. 10: 10. Paul said it was of the faith the apostles preached. Then all true disciples will earnestly contend for this item of the faith, see Jude 1: 3.

Bro. Harding, don't get tired of your chief authority on this question, for I must ask you to bear with me while I make one more quotation from him: "As we have, then, but one Lord, one faith, and one baptism, and that baptism is 'for the remission of sins'—to give us, through faith and repentance, a solemn pledge and assurance of pardon, any other baptism is a human invention and of no value; wanting, as it does, the sanction of the Lord Jesus."—Campbell on Baptism, pp. 256-57.

Now, I have previously shown that Bro. Campbell taught that, the baptism of those who went down into the water without knowing the design of that ordinance, was not valid, but was us a "blasted mil." Bro. Harding thinks that Bro. Campbell himself thus went down into the water, and that he died without correcting the mistake, but depended upon a baptism that he himself had made as worthless as a "blasted nut." But I think he either knew the design when he was baptized by Mr. Luce, or, that he was afterwards baptized upon unintelligent understanding of what he was doing. My idea *must* be the correct one, or it will stand as inevitable that Bro. Campbell was an insincere man! Header, which of us leaves the matter most honoring to that renowned disciple who now sleeps at Bethany?

But Bro. Harding thinks, the man who is reimmersed, privately, is a "poltroon and coward." I do not think that such a conclusion necessarily follows. Bro. John T. Walsh, who is now dead, and who was one of the "pioneers," wrote me that he knew that I was right in holding that some of these pioneers were secretly reimmersed. One who read his letter thinks Bro. Walsh classed himself among the number; but this I do not remember. He went into details and gave me the

reason why they did it secretly, and his explanation seemed to me to furnish plausible reasons for their course, I do not consider that these old soldiers who now rest from their labors, acted "poltroons and cowards."

Bro. Harding feels the force of my position that, Peter commanded the three thousand to be baptized *for the remission of sins*, that, "for the remission of sins," is a part of the command. So he tries to show that the peculiar circumstances of their being the murderers of Jesus tends to modify Peter's command when applied to others—this is my understanding of his remarks on that, but I am very much surprised at his taking such a position. In the first place, it is against reason to suppose that *all* of these three thousand took part in crucifying Jesus; and the command was to, "*every one of you.*"

Again, the promise of the gift of the Spirit was dependent upon the conditions commanded, that they repented and were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins. Then he said, "For the promise is unto you, and your children, and to *all* that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call."—Acts 2: 39. Hence, as the promise reached back to the conditions it was based upon, the conditions go hand in hand with the promise wherever it goes, And it goes to as many as God shall call.

In Bro. Harding's former argument he argued elaborately that, Acts 2: 38 and Acts 3: 19 were equal to each other, being equal to the same thing But now he would find a *little* difference on account of the difference of circumstances. This looks to me like trying to carry a point by human philosophy, becoming wise above that which is written, but the "unequal legs" stick out. But, as promised, I must not exhaust my space after irrelevant ramblings.

You missed the point entirely about, partaking of the emblems. God's design is that we shall eat

discerning the Lord's body and to show forth his death. But suppose we eat and drink to show forth the death of Julius Caesar, and discern Caesar's body in this institution, believing that God designed that, do we eat and drink worthily? This would be no farther from God's design affixed to this ordinance than is the object for which the so-called "orthodox" converts are baptized, from the design God has affixed to the ordinance of baptism. I want to know what you think of the worthiness of partaking of the supper in this way, for Caesar instead of for Christ?

The only semblance of argument Bro. Harding has made thus far in support of his position is what he says on 1 Cor. 15: 1-4, and 1 John 5: 1. But he gave up his position on the *three facts* being the gospel, when he admitted that facts could not be obeyed! The gospel *must* be obeyed, see Rom. 10: 10 and 1 Thes. 1: 8. In Gal., 1:6, Paul says: "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." I wonder if Paul meant that they had been moved from certain *three facts* to *three other facts*—from the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, to the death, burial and resurrection of some one else!

But, again, the gospel of Christ is the good news or glad tidings of Christ. Now, on the day of Pentecost, when Peter preached the *three facts*, it pricked them to the heart—was that good news to them? Oh no, it was sorrowful news. But there was *good* news to them in the 38th verse, "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 Spirit"—this they "gladly received." It was the only good news to them; hence it was a part of the gospel, at least; for gospel is good news.

Bro. Harding says Paul said to these Corinthians that, they were saved by the gospel, and so he did. They were saved by the same gospel that every

one else is saved by, if they are saved. My brother, turn to Titus 3: 5, and you will see that Paul says we are saved by the "washing of regeneration." Then if we are saved by a *three fact* gospel, the washing of regeneration is one of these facts! Paul and Peter taught the same doctrine and saved the people by the same gospel. Peter says; "Baptism doth also now save us," 1 Peter 3: 21. So, if we are saved by the gospel and nothing but the gospel baptism *must be* part of it, according to Peter! I wish you would notice these things, for you have drawn them out, and you have not grappled with the difficulties they throw across your way.

On 1 John, 5: 1, I only have to say that, after begetting comes that embryonic food that Peter gave in Acts 2: 38, which, when "gladly received," given that growth or development that prepares for mature birth, What you can make out of that Scripture for your position you are more than welcome to. The three thousand were begotten of God, and then cried out for developing food and Peter gave it in the 38th verse—that "famous verse." In conclusion, I repeat, I teach the same the apostles taught, and baptize the same class they baptized; and Bro. Harding cannot deny that this is right. I *will not* go beyond this, for the want of light—"that true light." But Bro. Harding does go beyond this and says that others may be baptized than those who have been taught the truth. I deny it, and will not follow him; and he upbraids me for it. I promise to go with him when he shows me authority. He shows me the example of Bro. Campbell! but this is not enough for me. Then he submits his *three fact* theory, but admits that facts can't be obeyed. So I reject this theory as "another gospel," because the gospel of Christ, the gospel preached by the apostles, is a gospel that *can* and *must* be obeyed!

Then he tells me that whosoever believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is begotten of God.



I Admit it, but there must be a growth between the begettal and the birth—give it room, Bro. Hurling, room enough to receive Acts 2: 38, and there is no room left for your theory! I reject the theory, too, because no man can come to Christ, except the Father which hath sent him draw him. How are they drawn to Christ by the Father? "It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God, Every man therefore that hath *heard*, and *hath learned* of the Father cometh to me."—John 6: 44-45. I know these people from the denominations are taught, Bro. Harding, but they are not taught of God. they are taught of men. They have not *heard* and *learned* of the Father, therefore they are not drawn to the Son—neither can you brethren draw them *by the hand*!

Again, those born of God, are born of the good seed of the kingdom, the incorruptible seed, the word of God, see Matt. 13, and 1 Peter 1: 23. These poor deluded creatures are drawn into human institutions, through water, by corruptible seed, the word of men, false teachers. If the truth should make them free, they would be free indeed. When the seed of night-shade produce cabbage, and gourd seed produce luscious melons, and "Jigs grow on thistles" we may begin to expect children of God to be born of Baptist, Methodist, and other corruptible seed. This will be when the animal, vegetable, mineral and spiritual kingdoms revolt against their Omnipotent Author and cease to work according to His design, which they have obeyed since his fiat brought them into existence. Then will man be startled by nature's freaks finding that which is born of flesh to be Spirit, and that which is born of Spirit to be flesh! The world will pass away, but the word of God will never pass away, "nor return unto me (God) void, but it shall accomplish that which I(God) please, and it shall prosper in the things whereto I (God)sent it." Isa. 55:11. God sent His word to be the seed of His spiritual kingdom, to make children of God, and nothing else will accomplish that whereto he sent it!

A. McGARY.

### HARDING'S FOURTH ARGUMENT.

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Bro. McGary claims that he not only esteems me a Christian, but in as far as I see the truth, he expresses great confidence in and respect for me as a true and fearless disciple of Christ. I shall struggle and pray to be worthy of his confidence and respect. But he thinks that when I am in error I blunder around, spring false issues, and try to lead our readers away from the real question, just as other poor, weak sons of Adam do under like circumstances. It is certain that one of us is in error, but it is a pure begging of the question for him to assume that I am the man. It would be better for him to utilize his space in bringing proof rather than in filling it with such assumptions. The crazy man thinks everybody else is mad, Bro. McGary thinks I am in error, while I am sure that he is; it behooves us, therefore, to do the best we can to sustain our positions, and then to submit the matter to those who read our essays, that each one may decide for himself as to what is true.

It is clear to me that Bro. McGary springs a false issue, and misrepresents me, when he claims that I have introduced Campbell, Stone, Scott, Smith, etc., as *authorities* in this discussion. He does not seem to be able to distinguish between referring to one as an authority and as an illustration. I stated my case, and then referred to these men as illustrations under the rule, at the same time carefully guarding against misunderstanding by stating that

I referred to them simply as illustrations and not as authorities. As well might Bro. McGary have charged me with introducing Mr. Smith's little boy John, or the horse that the worthy man drove through the gate, as authorities.

The point which I made, and illustrated by referring to Campbell and the others, is this: A man may believe Jesus to be the Christ the Son of God, may love him ardently from the depth of his heart, may repent of his sins, confess him as Lord, and be baptized in his name "for the remission of sins," without understanding the force of the word "for," I referred to Campbell (1) because he is the best known man among us, and (2) because no one who knows him will call in question his loyalty to God, or his faith in the Lordship of Jesus; no one of us doubts his diligence in the study of the word, his ability or his courage, Yet this man, when he was baptized, thought, as the Baptists now generally do, that his baptism was in order to declare a remission already obtained. He thought that "for" meant "in order to declare", instead of "in order to secure." "He that believeth and is immersed shall be saved", says Jesus. Campbell believed and was immersed. Paul shows, (Rom 10: 10: 9), that the thing to be believed is that God hath raised Jesus from the dead. When Campbell believed that, and was immersed confessing Jesus as Lord, he certainly fulfilled the conditions laid down by the Lord in Mark 16: 16, and he certainly was then forgiven.

Before leaving the word "for" I want to make one more illustration which I think exactly sets forth the state of the case: My little boy wants a hat. I tell him to go to the hat store and get one, and tell the merchant that I will be passing in a few moments, and that I will hand him the money. Shortly afterwards I step into the hat store and the following conversation ensues: J. A. H.—"Did my son call here for a hat?" Merchant.—"Yes, and he selected one which I said you could have for one dollar."

J. A. H.—(Laying a dollar on the counter and starting out), "Well, here is the dollar."

M.—"Hold on; wait till I give you the hat."

J. A. H.—"I thought the boy got the hat. I was paying you for what I supposed he had got."

M.— "He did not get it. However I will just keep the money, but an you misunderstood the force of the word "for" I am under no obligation to give you the hat, and of course I will not do it."

I will not stop to show the bearing of this illustration upon the case in hand. I think our renders can easily see it.

Bro. McGary then proceeds to show that the concession must be made before baptism, and quotes Campbell in proof of it. I very readily agree to that, for Paul says, "If thou shall confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shall be saved: for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."—Rom. 10: 9-10, R. V. Jesus must be confessed as Lord; but there is no formula given in the Bible according to which this confession is to be made. (Of course Bro. McGary knows that Acts 8: 37 is an interpolation.) If Jesus is acknowledged as Lord, no matter in what form of words it is done, the confession is valid. When the candidate for baptism says, "I believe that God has for Christ's sake pardoned my sins," he makes a mistake as to the matter of the pardon, but, if he understands the word "Christ," he fully confesses Jesus as Lord.

The Baptists teach that a man must believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God before he is fit for baptism, just as we do; and they explain the word "Christ" just as we do. The same is true of Pedobaptists, as a rule, in so far as adults are concerned. Moreover they emphasize the importance of believing with the heart just as we do.

Bro. McGary claims that "these people from the denominations are taught," "but they are not taught

of God, they are taught of men," he says. While I claim that in an far as they are taught from the word of God, they are taught of God. Alexander Campbell was taught by his Presbyterian father, from the word of God, that God is the Creator of all things and that Jesus his holy Son. He was taught that God raised Jesus from the dead, and that Jesus is the Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords. He was taught to love and repent, to confess and obey, and all of this while he was a Presbyterian; and just before his immersion he did solemnly say, "I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Although a Presbyterian up to this time, he had certainly been taught much by God.

Bro. McGary does these people great injustice when he says, those who are brought up under their preaching and leaching are taught not of God but of men. It is true that in their teaching they often sow bad seed, but it is equally true that much of their sowing is good, very good, being the pure word of God. As Christians it is our duty to be strictly just and fair in our statements concerning them. Whenever they read the Bible to a man, and the man is thereby instructed, he is taught of God; whenever they expound any portion of the word of God, he who learns of them is taught of God. Bro. McGary is doubtless aware that we owe to individuals connected with the denominations the preservation of the Bible, and the translation of it into our tongue. Indeed it was Walter Scott, a Baptist, who first (in these latter days) brought out clearly the scriptural doctrine concerning baptism for the remission of sins, and he was certainly taught of God when he was brought to a knowledge of that grand truth.

Bro. McGary says of those who are immersed by the Baptists, and by those other of the denominations, that "they are not taught of God, they are taught of men; they have not *heard* and *learned* of the Father, therefore they are not drawn to the Son." How, then, did we as a people get a start? Sixty-five or

seventy years ago there was not a church member in the United States who was not a member of some of these denominations. How, then, did anybody ever get to God? How did Campbell, or Stone, or Smith, or Scott, or Lipscomb, or McGary, or anybody else, ever get to God? There was no one in the world to touch but sinners, and members of the denominations. There was no one in the world to baptize except some member of the denominations. And it is also a fact that the people of the denominations were much further from the truth, much more in the dark than they are now, and in their lives they were not one whit better (if they were as good) as now. Bro. McGary has cut the limb off between himself and the tree. Whenever a man believes with his heart that God raised Jesus from the dead he is taught of God, no matter through whom the teaching comes; and whenever a man upon the confession of such a faith is immersed he is baptized into Christ, no matter by what administrator the baptism was performed. And in Christ "we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins."—Eph. 1:7.

Bro. McGary thinks that I intimate in a former argument that the confession is required merely to satisfy the administrator of the baptism. My brother is mistaken. I certainly did not intend to make such an intimation. While I claim that in Mark 10: 16 the confession is necessarily implied, since the administrator could not know of the faith without it. I hold with Bro. McGary that a verbal confession should be required because the Bible teaches "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." I am in no wise inclined to object to Bro. Campbell's statement that, "This confession must be made by every applicant for Christian baptism in order to his being constitutionally builded upon the divine foundation." But while we must hold tenaciously to the confession, as the Scriptures do not give any formula in which it is

to be uttered, we are not to demand that it should be made in any set form of words. When a man in any form of words has expressed the faith of his heart that Jesus is the Christ, or that Jesus is Lord, or that God hath raised Jesus from the dead, he has made the good confession. Paul says, (1 Tim. 6: 13) that Jesus witnessed this good confession before Pontius Pilate; but it is a fact that the Lord did not speak it in any form of speech, in which we are accustomed to ask it. He made it as follows: The Jews accused him, saying, "We found this fellow perverting the nation, and for-bidding to give tribute to Caesar, saying, that he himself is Christ a king." And Pilate asked him, saying, "Art thou the king of the Jews? And he answered him, and said, "Thou sayest it." See Luke 23:1-3. Then the master proceeded to explain that his kingdom was not of this world. See John 18: 33-38.

The all important matters, in so far as the confession is concerned, are (1) to believe with the heart in the Lordship of Jesus, and (2) in some form of words to express that faith. When a man has been taught as the denominations about us teach, and when he goes forward in all honesty, saying from his heart, "Jesus is my Savior," or "I believe God has for Christ's sake pardoned my sins," or, "I am trusting in Christ," or, "Jesus Christ has spoken peace to my soul," however incorrect some of these statements may be in some respects, it is certain that in every one of them there is as full a confession of the Sonship and Lordship of Jesus as can be found in the form of words in which the Master witnessed "the good confession" before Pilate.

Whatever the Scriptures require, we must demand in our teaching and practice; but where they do not bind, woe be unto us if we bind. It is as bad to be more particular than the Lord as it is to be less so.

Bro. McGary insists that Campbell and others

of the pioneers were secretly immersed. True, he produces no proof of it, he simply guesses, without testimony from God or man; but he must depend upon his guess, or leave these pioneers, (who loved God more ardently, studied his word more diligently, and obeyed him more scrupulously than almost any one now does) out of the kingdom, in their sins, lost. Moreover he must depend upon his guess, or, according to his theory, we are all in our sins, and there is no kingdom of God in the world: for if they were not reimmersed, they were never in the kingdom, and, (according to his teaching), could never lead any one to God, being themselves in the kingdom of the devil, or in the denominations: but Bro. McGary, myself and all our cotemporaries, who are contending against denominationalism, have been led into the positions that we occupy by those men, or by their converts; hence, if his premises be correct, none of us are in the kingdom.

Daniel prophesied concerning a kingdom which the God of heaven was to set up which was never to be destroyed, but was to stand forever. See Dan. 2: 44. Jesus, speaking concerning this kingdom, said, "Upon this rock I will build my church: and the gates of hell (*hades*) shall not prevail against it." He then calls this church "the kingdom of heaven." Matt. 10:15-18. Bro. McGary and I know well that this kingdom was set up on the first Pentecost after the resurrection of Jesus. But if his theory is correct, if a man cannot be taught of God through the denominations, and if a man must have a correct understanding of the design of baptism before he can be baptized into the kingdom, then for many years there was no kingdom of Christ on earth, for none properly understood the design of baptism, and there were no professed followers of Christ on earth except those connected with the denominations. Then Daniel's prophecy has failed, and the kingdom of God has been destroyed; the gates of *hades* have prevailed against



the church, and the words of Christ have come to naught.

A sister, who I presume was tinctured with views similar to those of Bro. McGary, once asked Bro. Campbell concerning the existence of the church during the dark ages, and before he and his coadjutors began to teach the truth concerning baptism, etc. He replied in substance that if during the times she referred to there were no Christians among the denominations, then God's word had failed, Christ's promise had come to naught, and the gates of hades had prevailed against the church. But he assured her of his conviction that during all of these years in the denominations and connected with them there were true Christians. And so it seems to me, we must nil believe, or let go of the word of God.

Bro. McGary wants to know if we were to partake of the supper in honor of Julius Caesar if it would do us any good. No. Neither would it do us any good to be baptized in the name of Julius Caesar. In both cases one must obey, loving, trusting in, and honoring Christ.

J. A. HARDING.

### McGARY'S FOURTH REPLY.

Perhaps I might offset Bro. Harding's effort to make me like "the crazy man," if I felt disposed to make the effort. He complains when I say he uses Campbell as authority; but he does not blench at saying, that I quote Campbell as proof on the confession! The difference between us in the use of Bro. Campbell's teaching and practice, is easily summed up: I follow Campbell as he followed Christ and the apostles, and will not follow him one step further! But Bro. Harding follows him beyond these divine bounds and reproaches me for not going to the same extent he does. He says this extent to which he goes and to which I will not go, is within divine bounds; I deny it and this gives rise to our controversy. He writes to prove; I write to disprove. I am sorry he has not been actuated in his writing more by a spirit of candid, searching fearlessness; but has wobbled about upon so much irrelevant ground. But I will briefly notice some of his extrinsic matter as I pass on to the main issue, which he has at last felt compelled to entrench himself behind—the *three fact* theory.

He dodged the point in the question I propounded about partaking of the bread and wine to show forth the death of Julius Caesar! He drew this question out by asking if it was necessary to understand the design of divine ordinances in order to obey them acceptably. I put this question to him to show him one, of which he would not dare say it was not necessary to understand the design.

But he sniffed the danger from afar and went around it. Before I close, I will try to hem your untenable position in with such insurmountable obstacles of truth, as you can neither clamber over nor sidle around.

It is trying to raise a false issue for you to try to convey the idea that I hold that orthodox (?) preachers *cannot* teach the truth, and *cannot* baptize persons into Christ. I do not hold that they *cannot* do either, but that they *do not*. I do not hinge anything upon the administrator, but hold, that when one hears God's truth about the life, death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, and is by that truth led to see that he is a sinner and that Jesus who lives evermore is his Savior, and learns the heaven-bound conditions upon which that Savior has promised to save him, and out of the "good ground" of an understanding heart, obeys the form of doctrine delivered by that Savior, through the apostles, that one is in Christ—no matter who performed the "burial" rite! But, "the good seed of the kingdom" must be in his heart and direct every step—not the corruptible iced of human doctrines and traditions, nor yet a mixture of corruptible and incorruptible seed; but the one pure, unmixed seed sent down to this low land by the Giver of every good and *perfect* gift. These "plants not planted by our heavenly Father," and which must be "rooted up" by His authority, shed no seed worthy of preservation or cultivation in our Master's vineyard, however "good, very good," Bro. Harding calls them. It is only in "the good seed of the kingdom" that the germ of faith is encased.

But Bro. Harding says of these men who preach the imaginations of their hearts—the doctrines and traditions of men, "It is true that in their teaching they often sew bad seed, but it is equally true that much of their sowing is good, very good, being the pure word of God." He says this because they preach the word "Christ"—they tell the *three*

*facts*. But is there any good in this while they are spurning the doctrine of Christ? As well might he say, the devil sowed "good, very good" seed when he said to Eve, "Ye shall not surely die, for God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil." Here he told some truth and used the word. "God."

Suppose a man is in the throes of some direful disease, and an eminent physician proscribes a sovereign remedy. Suppose his nurse tampers with the prescription and pours in it medicine of a counter quality and gives it, thinking it will facilitate the action of the other, would Bro. Harding call this a good, very good act? This is just what he is doing on a grand scale! The Great Physician has proscribed for the leprous soul of man, and has sealed the proscription with the blood-seal of His own heart. Quack doctors— D. D's.—are tearing this seal and pouring their deleterious decoctions into the heaven-bound remedy, and Bro. Harding says, "Good, very good!"

Those who sow the good seed, as represented by our Lord in Matt. 13 are not those who sow *some* of God's word and *some* of man's traditions and doctrines that deny God and His Christ, but those who sow God's word, no more and no less.

Bro. Harding believes in *a* confession, before baptism, but not in "the good confession"—*the* is too definite for him at this *particular time*. Acts 8: 37 is too spurious *now*; it is put on a par with that sentence of supreme denial of God's word—"I believe God for Christ's sake has pardoned my sins." Bro. Harding says the Bible does not give any formula for the confession. Thou Paul was mistaken when he said confession unto salvation was a part of the faith, or, when he said the Scriptures thoroughly furnish unto all good works! When I turn to Matt, 16: 16; Mark 8: 20; Luke 9: 20; John 6: 69, and 11:27, and 20: 31, etc., I am assured that Paul is right and Bro. Harding wrong.

I must express my astonishment at Bro. Harding for thinking that the orthodox (?) statement, which gives voice to the pernicious doctrine of direct impact of the Holy Spirit upon the sinner's heart and denies "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," is as valid a confession of God's only begotten Son, as that confession made by Peter, upon which the Lord said he would build his church! This seems to me to be whirling around upon a dangerous circle. I beseech my brother to stop and think how far it will ultimately take him from apostolic grounds.

Bro. Harding doubtless thinks he can decoy me away from his loitering *three fact* position, to a division of time on the question of church perpetuity; but he cannot find shuttling room here. It matters not what construction may be put on Dan. 2: 44, nor our Lord's language when he said, "The gates of hell (*hades*) shall not prevail against it," it effects not this question. However it is *very* evident to my mind that Bro. Harding misses the true idea, in the language of the Lord. The truth that Peter stated, when he said he was, "the Christ, the .Son of the living God," is certainly what the gates of *hades* should not and did and will not prevail against. It is the foundation of the church, of the gospel and the faith. But I will not tarry here to enforce this, for it is not material to this controversy. .Suppose his ideas of Dan, 2:44 and Matt. 10: 10 *are* correct, the *consequence* that he seeks to prop his falling theory with—for bear in mind, he has shied off here from the real issue on a hunt for consequences—cannot be established. Where is the man who possesses a sufficient degree of omniscience to turn his eye back down the hazy track of time and define the faith and practice of each individual who has figured in the bustling affairs of this world, from Alexander Campbell to John's sojourn upon Patmos? What presumption! These brethren start with a very doubtful interpretation of Dan 2:44 in their mind in quest of a body of

people who bear the scriptural marks that entitle them to be called "Christians." With the divine measuring reed in hand they trace the chain from themselves to Alexander Campbell. But lo and behold! Here is the *last link* they can find, that will measure correctly. But they *must* be connected all the way back, so they shorten their measuring reed till it will fit the links in the Baptist chain, and weld their last link to the Baptist chain. Thus they corroborate Dan. 2: 44 and save their chain intact! They have stood upon the eminence of their own wisdom and surveyed this earth from center to circumference, and have decided what has existed in it and what has not, and to meet the demand of God's word they have modified God's word so that many things preached by the apostles need not be believed!!!

Next, Bro. Harding gives us a lesson on the word "for," in an illustration in which he, his son, and a merchant figure. He sent his son to *get* a hat. The boy *selected* one and left. So this narrows his illustration down to himself and the merchant.

Bro. Harding stepped into the store and asked: "Did my son call here for a hat?"

Merchant.—"Yes, and selected one which I said you could have for a dollar." Bro. H.—"Here is your money." M.—"Hold on; wait till I give you the hat." Bro. H.—"I thought the boy got the hat. I was paying for what I supposed he had got."

M.—"He did not get it. However I will just keep the money, but as you misunderstood the force of the word "for" I am under no obligations to give you the hat, and of course I will not do it." A. McGary comes up and says: "Mr. Merchant, you are mistaken, Bro. Harding did *not* "misunderstand the force of the word 'for,'" but "supposed the boy had got the hat," and that you had credited him for a few hours for the price of it. I can tell you the trouble between you; there are just two points in it: you are a dishonest man, and Bro.

Harding's credit is not good with you."

Bro. Harding, did thin occur in Winchester? I do not believe it did; for I do not believe your credit is that bad at home. Explain to us though, if you please, for you have aroused our curiosity.

Let me correct you on your trouble about "for," which you seem to think you can hide behind. There is no such a trouble, really. The doctrine of the sectarian world that you now find yourself forced to defend is a product of a "delusion" which loads them to "believe a lie." All of this gabble about "for" is a subterfuge. Jesus said, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Is there any "for" in this? Is there any "for" in John 3:5? "Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." Where is the "for" in this? Well, now, in conclusion, I will return from the grounds of digression he has led me upon by his rovings, to the true base of operation, and again force him to flee from his chosen citadel—the three *fact* theory:

in Mark 16: 15-16 we find the great commission under which our Lord sent his apostles to preach and baptize; and the authority of this commission descends to all faithful men who would save their fellowmen from sin, by this same blood-sealed gospel of the "one Lord, one faith, and one baptism" the apostles preached unto the salvation of men eighteen hundred years ago.

Bro. Harding says this "gospel" is fully preached when the three facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ are proclaimed. This is the true battle-ground for the decisive struggle over the question of the validity of Baptist and other sectarian immersions; for this issue cannot be settled upon any other.

So, if he proves that these three facts constitute the entire "gospel" he gains the question, and establishes the authority for receiving Baptists and other immersed sectarians without reimmersion.

If he fails to prove this point, then he fails to show any authority whatever this practice; and if he then continues the practice he acts, at least, in the dark. But if I disprove this proposition, then down goes his practice into the vortex of humanisms, with baby-sprinkling and all other perverse things that set the commandments of God at naught. *Then* if he continues the practice he does so against the light of the truth, and is a willful, presumptuous trespasser against the heaven-bound way of God's apostles'.

How does he seek to prove this proposition? By quoting 1 Cor. 15:1-4, in which Paul uses the words, "death, burial and resurrection" in connection with the word, "gospel." How do I know and prove that his idea, that Paul here defines the gospel to be the death, burial and resurrection of Christ, is false? By showing that the same apostle says that the *gospel* is to be *obeyed*, (see Rom. 10: 16 and 1 Thes. 1:8). I asked him if *facts could be* obeyed, and he answered, "Certainly not." Then *certainly* his interpretation of 1 Cor. 15: 1-4 is altogether wrong! Here his *three fact* theory goes down to rise no more, till he reconsiders his answer, and finds that *facts can be obeyed!*

Remember, that his theory will not admit of anything as being any *part* of the "gospel," but these *three facts*. Notice, then, that Paul says, in 1 Cor., where Bro. H. says he is defining and limiting the term, "gospel," to the *three facts*: "By which (gospel) also ye are *saved*." Now notice in Titus 3: 5, this same apostle says: "*We are saved by the washing of regeneration!*"

Now I press this question, Would Paul write the Corinthians that the *three, facts*, to the exclusion of *everything else*, had *saved* them, and then write to Titus that something besides these three *facts*— *the washing of regeneration*—*saved* us? If the apostle would not thus cross himself and stand convicted of folly, Bro. Harding is wrong in his construction of 1 Cor. 15: 1-4 and his theory is exploded and



gone like the chaff of the summer's threshing floor I pressed this difficulty upon him in my third reply, but he has stood as speechless before it as a tombstone—this is a very ominous silence, too! I believe my brother begins to realize that he stands before obstacles with which he cannot successfully grapple. But such fond memories are linked to the practice he is trying to defend he may cling to it till the scorpion lashes of conscience whip him loose.

He still says: "Paul shows. (Rom. 10: 9-10), that the thing to be believed is that God hath raised Jesus from the dead." Then the *things* the apostles preached that are *not* to be believed are too numerous to attempt to enumerate! According to this, Philip was too slow in baptizing his converts in Samaria—he did not baptize them till they believed his preaching of the "*things concerning the kingdom, of God, and the name (authority) of Jesus Christ.*" But I forgot while on Bro. Harding's *indefinite* confession, to give Bro. Hansbrough's idea about it. He says Bro. Harding makes the confession like the god of the Methodist Discipline—"without body, passion or parts."

In Jeremiah 31: 31-31, that prophet foretells the "New Covenant" that God was going to make, and outlines the fundamental difference between the law of induction into this "New Covenant," and the then existing Covenant. The one existing when the prophet wrote, and which continued for more than six centuries after he wrote, was entered by a fleshly birth, without their knowing how, when or why they were in it—the moment a Jewish babe opened its mother's womb and passed into this world it was a member of that old Covenant. But not so with the New Covenant.

As explanatory of what the prophet says in the passages referred to about: "They shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying know the Lord: for they shall all know me from the least of them unto the greatest of them."

I cite you to Heb. 8: 10, "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts." Now, in order that the people might know the Lord in thin way, that His law might be put in their minds and written in their hearts—in order that they might have a chance to know the truth that was to make them free—too apostles and other faithful men after them, have been sent to preach, teach, make known, or write the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus, in their hearts, so they could "obey *it from the heart*."

When Peter preached the *three facts* on Pentecost, and they cried out, did they have the law written in their hearts? Oh no; it was after that that it was written, as it has ever since stood in Acts 2:38. There is no law in the *three facts*; but they refer to and substantiate the authority of Jesus to *give* this law which Peter then wrote in their hearts, and which they *gladly* received *before* they wore born into the Now Covenant—born of water and Spirit. Your *three fact* theory doesn't fill the measure of the prophecy, nor the fulfillment, nor anything else but the abstractions of so-called "orthodoxy."

But I fear I have written more than you did; if I have make it up in your next, which is your last.

A. McGARY.

**HARDING'S FIFTH ARGUMENT.**

In his last reply (the fourth one) Bro. McGary says: "It is trying to raise a false issue for you to try to convey the idea that I hold that orthodox (?) preachers *cannot* teach the truth, and *cannot* baptize persons into Christ. I do not hold that that they *cannot* do either, but that they *do not*." (See page 50). In his third reply (See page 40) he says, "I know these people from the denominations, are taught, Bro. Harding, but they are not taught of God, they are taught of men. They have not *heard* and *learned* of the Father, therefore they are not drawn to the Son."

From which I conclude, in the first place, that the leaders in our effort to restore the apostolic church were never taught of God, were never drawn to Christ, were never freed from their sins, but they died out of Christ, and have gone to perdition, seeing that those who taught them believed in the miraculous operation of the Spirit upon the sinner in his conversion, and misunderstood the design of baptism, just like the denominations now do. Indeed sectarians were much more in the dark and much more extravagant in their false teachings then than now. This is a rather startling conclusion seeing that these pioneers believed in God and in Christ, repented of their sins, confessed Jesus as Lord loving him with a wonderful love, were immersed to obey him because they loved him, made sacrifices in following him that to its

appear appalling, searched the Scriptures diligently believing every inspired word to be true, and they were the men who found out the truth about the work of the Spirit, and the design of baptism, and taught it to us. Yet according to Bro. McGary they were never taught of God, never drawn to Christ, because their teachers in teaching them mixed some corruptible seed with the good seed. In order to draw to Christ he says (page 50) the seed must be the one pure, unmixed seed. Well, it is certain that a lot of false ideas were taught to them, and that they did not get rid of all of them either while they lived in this world.

I conclude, in the second place, that we (Bro. McGary and myself and all of us) have not been taught of God, have not been drawn to Christ, and hence are yet in our sins, if Bro. McGary's theory be correct; for those who taught lift had erroneous notions about various points of the doctrine of Christ. Indeed, as none of us claims to understand the New Testament doctrine in its entirety in perfection, it is by no means certain (according to his doctrine) that anybody has ever been led to Christ through the teaching of any of us.

"Ah," my brother may exclaim, "are you not running off after consequences?" Yes, I am. I am showing that consequences that are palpably absurd necessarily flow from his doctrine, and hence that the doctrine is false. But I shall now show the falsity of his position concerning the unmixed seed in a much more direct way: He says the teaching of a man must be "unmixed," that it must all be pure and good, or else God does not teach through that man, nor is any one drawn to Christ through him. Let us see about that. Baptists believe in the existence of God, and in his wisdom and goodness and power, as truly and as fully as we do; they believe in the sonship and lordship of Jesus as we do; they are just as strong and earnest in proclaiming that he is the Christ the Son of the living God as we are. Now when a

man, under their teaching, from the depths of an honest heart accepts Jesus as his Savior, when he cries out in all sincerity acknowledging Jesus as his Lord and Christ, he has been taught of God. Here is my proof: "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," 1 Cor. 12: 3. So much for Bro. McGary's statement that men are not taught of God under the ministry of sectarians! Nothing could be further from the truth. We ought to be careful not to bear false witness against those people. There is enough for us to bring against them without misrepresenting the truth that they teach, or the good that they do.

"But," inquires one, "are not the 'good ground' people those who hear the word and understand it, who keep it and bring forth fruit with patience?" Yes, truly. But how much must they understand? How fully must they understand in order to be able to obey? Jesus answers the question when he calls that man a wise one who hears his sayings and does them. *A man must understand enough to do what Christ says do.* And, as we have seen, under sectarian teaching men far greater than we, and far more learned than we, have come to believe in Christ, to repent, to confess, to be immersed, and afterwards to search the Scriptures with great diligence and to follow them with marvelous courage, even until death.

Does Bro. McGary hold that a man must understand all of "the good seed," that he must be wholly free from false notions before he can come to Christ? Then, if that be true, no man has ever come to Christ, there is no church in the world, and there never was. When the apostles themselves came to Christ they did not understand the design of their coming. They expected the Lord to establish a temporal kingdom, and they desired to rule with him in that kingdom, each aspiring to be greatest. After Christ came up from the grave, they were still slow to understand, for when he gave them the great commission, they did not dream

that in it he included Gentiles. "All the world" to them meant all the Jewish world; "every creature" meant every Jewish creature; "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" meant every Jew that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. It was not till about eight years after the ascension of Christ that even Peter learned that Gentiles were included in that commission. Was all of his preceding work under that commission invalid because he did not fully understand it? Nay, verily, the Lord's law was that the apostles were to preach first at Jerusalem, then in Judea, then in Samaria, and then among the Gentiles; and Peter and the rest understood enough to move along in obedience to him.

Bro. McGary and I are striving for eternal life; but do we understand in its length and breadth and depth, the meaning of the phrase "eternal life"? Surely not. Christ has promised to those who by patience in well doing seek for glory and honor and incorruption, eternal life; and I am sure that my conception of that glorious gift is very feeble and imperfect; nevertheless I labor on most joyfully, being assured that Christ in his giving will not be limited by the feebleness of my understanding, but that he will give according to his riches in wisdom and knowledge and power. It is mine to love and to obey: it is his to bless.

In another place Jesus says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my word, and believeth him that sent me, hath eternal life, and cometh not into judgment, but hath passed out of death into life," John 5: 24, R. V. Now I am sure that very few people among us, and perhaps not any among the denominations, understand the meaning of the word "believeth" in this verse; very few can explain how it is that the believer is saved, "*hath eternal life,*" is passed "*out of death into life.*" Many a reader of THE FIRM FOUNDATION could not harmonize this passage with the doctrine of baptism for remission if his

life depended upon it. I could not have done it, when I first came into Christ, to have saved my life; but it in plain enough to me now. And there are many preachers among us who do not understand the word "believeth" in this verse, much less the "eternal life," who nevertheless have fulfilled the word by believing, and who have the eternal life. And some of these are the most rabid in their advocacy of rebaptizing the Baptists because they did not understand the word "for" in Acts 2: 38 when they were immersed.

When I was baptized I could not possibly have given a clear, sharply defined definition of the word "repent." Not one Christian in twenty that I meet can do it. I doubt *it'* Alexander Campbell could have done it at any time in his life. But I did *the thing*, so did Campbell, so have all Christians. And I am glad that (Sod will not condemn us for our poverty in defining, or our weakness in understanding, provided we understand enough to do his will, and lovingly walk according to that light. Is it more important to understand the word "for" in Acts 2: 38, than it is to understand "believeth" in John 1: 12, or "repent" Acts 2: 38? I cannot see why it should be so.

Bro. McGary has utterly failed to meet my position with regard to the confession. We fully agree that it must be made before baptism, but we differ as to this: He seems to think that there is a set form of words in which it is to be made; this I deny. When a man in any form of speech, from his heart, confesses Jesus the Son of God as his Lord; he has made the good confession. When I said that Acts 8: 37 is an interpolation, I stated a fact which biblical scholars generally know to be true, and have known to be true for at least twenty-five years. I have not used it in proof in preaching or in debating for years. When Bro. McGary insinuates that I claim it is spurious simply to meet an emergency in this debate, when he intimates that I want a confession before baptism instead of

"*the* good confession"—that the "*the*" is too definite for me at this *particular time*, he clearly means to insinuate that I am a dishonest quibbler, and he does it without the slightest foundation for it. (See page 51). And in doing it he has violated the plainest precepts of the word of God.

He says of me, (page 49): "I am sorry he has not been actuated in his writing more by a spirit of candid, searching fearlessness; but he has wobbled about upon so much irrelevant ground." Upon which I remark, that I did not expect to please Bro. McGary in this discussion when I began it, simply because it is not pleasing to one to have his arguments overturned and insurmountable obstacles put in his pathway. But I did not expect him to impugn the motives by which I am "actuated," or to attack the "spirit" in which I write. I am willing to leave it to the tribunal before which we are to go—the public—as to which of us is the more candid, the more strictly argumentative, as to which sticks closer to the true issue, and is freer from the use of slang, and rough, uncouth and unpolemical language. As mi illustration of his style he charges that I "dodged the point in question," that I "sniffed the danger from afar and went around it," and that I tried to "raise a false issue," all of which is wholly incorrect; it is exactly the reverse of the truth.

But to go back to the confession: In the common version (1 Timothy 6: 13) it is called "a good confession," but in the revised version it is properly called "the good confession." This good confession Paul says Jesus witnessed before Pontius Pilate. And I called attention to the fact that he did not make it in any form of words in which we are accustomed to make it. (Turn back and read page 10). He did not use the words found in Mali. 1G: 1G, nor those found in the interpolated verse, Acts 8: 37; but the words that he spoke, taken in the connection in which they were spoken, did constitute the good confession; Paul says so. Now



when a candidate for baptism at a Baptist church says, "I believe that God has for Christ's sake pardoned my sins," he just as certainly confesses the existence of God and the Lordship of Jesus, as Christ did before Pilate, though the candidate is mistaken as to what God has done. Can not a man believe with all his heart in the existence of God, and in the resurrection of Jesus, and at the same time be mistaken as to the time of pardon? Certainly no can. No man calls it in question. Then he can confess Christ while yet in the dark on the design of baptism. Bro. McGary has never met the issue on that confession which Christ made before Pilate, *and he never will simply because he cannot*. No man can establish a set form of word<sup>3</sup> in which the confession is to be taken. Even if Acts 8: 37 were not an interpolation, the fact that Jesus in making "the good confession" used an other set of words would show that no one form is binding. Woe be to the man who binds where God has not bound. It is easier to quote a squib from his associate, Bro. Hansbrough, than it is to answer my argument.

Bro. McGary thinks that good seed cannot bear good fruit, if there is any bad seed mixed with it, and sown in the same field!!! I wonder if he ever did any farming? If so, I wonder if he has lost all of his farming sense, since he began to edit THE FIRM FOUNDATION?

Bro. McGary says; "Quack doctors—D.D's.—are tearing this seal and pouring their deleterious decoctions into the heaven-bound remedy, and Bro. Harding says, 'good, very good,'" Not so; not so. Never did he make a greater mistake. When the D.D's., or anybody also, teach that God is the great Creator, that Jesus is his holy Son whom the Father raised from the dead, that we should love Christ and turn from our sins and obey him, that we should repent of our sins and be immersed trusting in Christ with the full purpose of heart to follow him in all things, I say, amen; it is the

teaching of God and not of man. But when they begin to teach their traditions and commandments, I oppose them with all my heart. In the one case the seed is good, very good; in the other it is bad, very bad. In some cases the quantity of the bad seed that finds its way into the heart is so much greater than the good, that the latter is choked out and brings no fruit to perfection; but in many cases, under sectarian teaching, the good seed, the word of God has by far the greater influence, so that he who receives it becomes wonderful in his faith and love, in his loyalty and devotion to Jesus. So it was with Scott and Smith and Stone and Campbell. Why at the very time that Thomas Campbell wrote that famous sentence, "Where the Bible speaks, we speak; and where the Bible is silent, we are silent," he was fearfully beclouded with the mists and fogs of false teaching. He believed in infant baptism, the direct operation of the Spirit on the sinner's heart in conversion, and he doubted not but that men were pardoned before baptism. But good seed was working in his heart, or (to change the figure) he saw before him alight like unto the pillar of fire which guided the children of Israel in their wanderings, and he and Alexander and many others ran eagerly after it, coming more and more out of the fog, more and more into brightness and glory, till it led them through the veil into the presence of the great Creator.

Yes, our Lord witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate, but he did not say anything about baptism for remission of sins. There is nothing about baptism or remission either in the confession; it deals purely with the divinity of Jesus, which was attested by his resurrection from the dead.

When a man comes to me believing Jesus to be the Son of God, repenting of his sins, confessing Jesus as Lord and demanding to be baptized in his name, I have no right to ask any farther question,

or to interpose any obstacle in his way. If I do as apostolic men did I will baptize him at once. And so I do. But not so with Bro. McGary: he must inquire, do you understand the design of baptism? Do you believe that it is in order to secure the remission of sins? In so far as the records show, no apostolic man ever asked any such question. Bro. McGary is blazing his own way.

Paul says, "If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved." How? Why, in the apostolic age such a man as that was at once baptized, and was thus saved. He had the proper faith, and had made the good confession, and hence was ready for baptism. Any Christian then would baptize such a man. But not so now. If such a man were to come Bro. McGary, he would not baptize him, unless he also understood the doctrine of baptism for remission. A conversation something like this might occur:

*Question.*—Do you believe that baptism is for the remission of sins, do you believe what Peter said in Acts 2: 38?

*Answer.*—Yes, I believe everything in the Bible.

*Question.*—But do you understand it?

*Answer.*—No, sir, I don't believe I do. Some say the "for" means "in order to secure"; others say it means "in order to declare," and I am in doubt as to which is right. But Jesus knows what it means, and I am willing to trust him. I love him, I believe in him, I am determined to follow him, I now confess him as my Lord, and I want to be baptized in his name, trusting in him "for the remission of sins," and for "the gift of the Holy Ghost." He is to give those promises, he understands what they are. It is mine to obey, and his to give. I am willing to trust all to him.

To such a man Bro. McGary would have to *any*, It is not sufficient for you to believe that baptism is for remission; you must *understand* it; you need not understand the promise "you shall receive the

gift of the Holy Ghost;" but the words "for remission" you must understand, I wont baptize you, I know the commission teaches, He that believes that God has raised Jesus from the dead, and is immersed, shall be forgiven, I know I have admitted that you do not have to understand a promise in order to be able to obey the command upon winch it is predicated, but I wont baptize you Reader, would he be right?

Read 1 Cor. 15: 1-8. In this passage Paul claims to declare to the Corinthians the gospel which they received, which they believed, in which they stood and by which they were saved; and then he gives it, namely, the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Bro. McGary calls this the "three fact gospel." In Romans 10: 9, Paul condenses it into one fact, namely, "God hath raised Jesus from the dead." This is to be believed. Then when one is immersed, he has died to sin, has been buried and raised again, He has obeyed the gospel. Then come the precious promises, the remission of sins, and the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Why do we eat? Because the law of our nature, hunger, commands us to eat. Natural law is God's law. Why are we baptized? Because the Bible, God's spiritual law, commands us to be baptized. Must one understand the design of *eating* in order to get the blessing? No; eating is designed to build up and strengthen the eater; the infant does not understand this, but when he obeys natural law, hunger, he gets the blessing. Must one understand the design of baptism in order to get the blessing? Certainly not; when one, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, obeys the Bible, the spiritual law, he gets the blessing whether he understands the nature of the blessing or not. Few people think anything about building up their bodies when they eat. They eat because they are hungry. Few people, I opine, have their minds on the doctrine of baptism for remission when they are baptized. They are rather thinking about Christ, They are baptized because he wants them to be.

One other matter: The hat and dollar case was a "supposed one." I have never strained my credit at Winchester.

J. A. HARDING.

**McGARY'S FIFTH REPLY.**

Bro. Harding has pulled on the laboring oar a year and yet his craft is right where he launched it, upon the open sea of speculation without chart or compass, driven to and fro by the shifting winds of his *three fact* doctrine.

After we give some attention to his last and badly overstrained effort, we will conclude with a recapitulation showing the insuperable obstacles he has encountered and how he sought to escape their crushing effect by dodging into the woods and giving a great nourish of trumpets. He seems a little piqued at me for saying, he "dodged the point in question," "sniffed the danger from afar and went around it," and "raised a false issue." He sets these expressions of mine down in order that the reader may decide which of us is the "rougher, more uncouth and unpolomical." I did not know that this was the question to be decided in this controversy, but since he makes it so, I will ask the reader to compare these with his expression about them, which he immediately followed them with, where he says of them: "All of which is wholly incorrect; it is exactly the reverse of the truth." Now, reader, what is *exactly the reverse of the truth*? A lie, of course! Thou set his charge, that I have lied, down by my expressions, and I am ready to hear your verdict upon this point, too. If I would take up space to quote some expressions of his against brethren with whom he has

discussed the missionary society and organ questions, in the *Gospel Advocate*, I could make him run from this side issue as rapidly as he has from the *real* issue in this baptismal question. But I forgive him for accusing me of saying things that are "exactly the reverse of the truth," for I know he would not do so were he not possessed of this blinding delusion that compels him to contend that a man may be filled with the corruptible seed of the doctrines of men and if these seed are *soaked* in much water, they produce a new born babe in Christ, a child of the kingdom!!!

Now I hope he will not wax hotter at me, when I repeat that he grows worse and worse at raising false issues; for his last is one grand tissue of it from first to last. I dislike to have this to say in my concluding article, for as I have before said, I have great respect for Bro. Harding, individually, and would not unnecessarily wound his feelings. But I cannot consent for him to fog the way to a fair consideration of this question, with the false issues his blind and inexorable delusion forces him to suspend over the true and logical approach to the real issue. Pardon me, my brother, while I clear the way that you have tried so hard to overcast with Babylonish vapor.

(1) Your *terrible* conclusion, which you claim to have deduced from my position—which conclusion dumps all of the pioneers, and you and me, and "all the rest of us" into "perdition" at one fell swoop of your logic—gushes through a false issue; and after you have strained it, like a mouse giving birth to a mountain, you yourself seem to recognize the fact that it is another case of the mountain laboring and bringing forth a mouse! For after you exhausted yourself upon it, you ask: "Does Bro. McGary hold that a man must understand all of the good seed, that he must be wholly free from false notions before he can come to Christ?" Now my brother if you had asked this question before you replied to its answer, you would have spared

yourself a very great effort and saved your thunder to have been directed at some real issue; but as it is, you are loft panting from exhaustion by a most desperate tussle with a straw man; for I would have answered, No!

You then go on to enquire how much one must understand, and you conclude by saying: "Jesus answers the question when he calls that man a wise one who hears his sayings and does them." To this I say, anion! But it is a very unfortunate answer for your theory. What are the "sayings" of Jesus about the salvation of the alien sinner, from his past sins? After instructing his apostles to go and preach the gospel to these sinners, He says of those who hear that apostolic gospel, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," Mark 16: 16. This is just what I am contending for. But Bro. Harding's theory forces him to say that those who hear the "sayings" of *uninspired men*, and are baptized, shall be saved! Here I deny him and call for the proof! But instead of giving us proof he has filled up his several articles with unnecessary lamentations over the pioneers! Thus he has sought to baptize his blunders in the tears of over-sensitive readers! Hut, after all, the proper place to shed tears in this discussion, is where Bro. Hardin's statement of Bro. Campbell's case makes

Bro. Campbell out an insincere man. See pp. 21, 22, and 30. As well as he loves the memory of Bro. Campbell, his relentless human plea would not allow him to exonerate this dear old soldier of the cross from such a damaging imputation, lest it might lose a little by the confession of his mistake about him.

Bro. Harding turns away from me and bounces his straw man again, when he combats the idea that good seed cannot produce good fruit when sown in the same held with bad seed. See my remarks on page 50. My position is, that it matters not how much bad seed may be sown, if the good seed is received, understood and allowed to direct

the heart to the ordinance of God (baptism). But what I deny is when bad seed—the sayings of uninspired men, who teach the doctrine of conversion by a direct impact of the Holy Ghost—enters the heart and directs it to baptism for a different purpose from the divine purpose, that such baptism is the "one baptism," or that Christ has promised to forgive sins upon the belief of such stuff and dabbling in the water in total ignorance of its true design. The commission of Christ commands no such teachers to "go," and its provisions do not take their work into account.

No, my brother, I have not lost my farming sense since I commenced editing the FIRM FOUNDATION. His my farming sense, enlightened by the entrance of that word which "giveth light," that leads me to see the harmony and convincing power of "the doctrine once delivered, to the saints," and to earnestly contend for it, and to stoutly repudiate your theological nonsense that would place the corruptible seen, the sayings of uninspired men, upon a par with incorruptible seed, and subvert every principle of reproduction throughout the realms of the kingdoms of nature and grace.

When our Lord speaks of the good ground and the sowing of good seed in that ground, Matt. 13: 23, He left no room for such tinkering with that beautiful parable, as you are trying to do, to make the doctrines and commandments of men, which he said were vain, equal with his heaven-bound system of salvation. Your effort to apologize for the pernicious doctrines of men, by "striving about the word "for" is truly, to no profit, for I have shown you clearly, that it is a mere subterfuge your delusion forces you to take hold of, as a drowning man taking hold of a straw. The word "for" does not occur in the commission, but there our Lord promises salvation to those who believe and are baptized. You might surround yourself with a thousand of the most slippery theologians in all "orthodoxy" and they and you could not fix



up any plausible excuse for misunderstanding the words of our Lord here, see Mark 10:15, 10. Neither can you misunderstand John 3; 5. nor Acts 22; 10—don't you wish "for" was in all of them?

My brother, I inn astonished at you! You know if you will permit yourself to be candid on this question, that the troublous, that the false doctrine—direct operation of the Holy Ghost on the sinners' heart, and instantaneous conversion—is taught and they believe it, and that delusion causes them to reject the doctrine of Christ, and "for" is only a pretext; and you ought to know that this is true, for I have shown you once before the fallacy of it too plainly for you not to see it. if you were willing to.

Again, you fly upon your straw man upon the question of the confession! I do not contend for a set form of words, but for a true confession *of Jesus* as the Christ. I have several times combated the idea that it must be made in any set form of words. The several references I made to passages that set forth the confession, though all in different forms of words, would have kept you from attributing such a position to me, if you had not been trying to run roughshod and blindfold over the obstacles I had thrown in your way.

But I deny that the "orthodox experience of grace" is in any sense a confession of *Jesus* as Christ. This is what you ought to have tried to prove instead of filling your pages on false issues. I do not contend that Acts 8: 37 is not an interpolation, but that it is a good form of confession because it is a confession of *Jesus* as the Christ, This is what makes it better than that "experience of grace," which is a graceless falsehood ! Your proof text, "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost," to prove that when a man "cries out acknowledging Jesus as his Lord and Christ" he is taught of God, does you no good; for these "orthodox" converts do not cry out with any such expression, but they *rejoice* "out, I believe God for Christ's sake (not *Jesus* Christ) has pardon-

ed my sins." Yes, I did say that a man need not understand the nature of the promise, "You shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost," and for that matter I would not mind saying that it man need not understand the *nature* of remission of sins; but that is quite a different thing from not believing the word of God when it commands us to be baptized for the remission of sins, and tells us that then, and not till then, will He forgive us.

You say, "few people, I opine, have their minds on the doctrine of baptism for remission when they are baptized. They are rather thinking about Christ." That is strange talk. The true way to think about Christ is to think about him as his word reseats him. You talk like a man cannot be thinking about Christ when he is being baptized with an understanding of the divine end of baptism. I wonder if you are thinking about Christ when you are debating with sectarians about the design of baptism? If you are right in contending that people need not understand the design of baptism then you are the most presumptuous sinner I know of; for you know there is no good, but immense evil to grow out of it, if you are right. According to your teaching on this, when you are debating with Baptists about the design of baptism, you are standing in the shoes of the man of whom Paul writes when he says: "Mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned"—you claim to have learned that it is not necessary to understand the design of baptism; then behold your sinful self in this language of the apostle; for you widen the breach between yourself and your Baptist brethren every time you debate this question with them, and it is a nonessential—a "striving about words to no profit," if you are right. You know you cannot keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace with them, as long as you fight them over the design of baptism, and deny their baptism of the Holy Ghost; and you claim to know

that they need not understand the very thing you are laboring to have them to understand, and the very thing that keeps up a broiling contention between you and them.

You talk about men building up their bodies by eating, without eating with the express understanding that it will build up their bodies, as though that added anything to your position that they would be built up spiritually by being baptized without understanding the design. You seem to forget that horses and cattle and all other animals build up their bodies by eating, too, I know you do not think it would benefit them to be baptized! But I believe it would benefit a horse just as much as it benefits a man who goes down into the water as ignorant as a horse of its design! I dislike to call attention to any other false issue that Bro. Harding has raised: but I cannot consent to let this last one pass, because it is the worst and most inexcusable of them all. I refer to his saying, "When a man comes to me believing Jesus to be the Son of God, repenting of his sins, confessing Jesus as Lord and demanding to be baptized in his name, I have no right to ask any further question, or to interpose any obstacle in his way. If I do as apostolic men did I will baptize him at once, And so I do. But not so with Bro. McGary: he must inquire, do you understand the design of baptism? Do you believe it is in order to secure the remission of sins? In so far as the records show no apostolic man over asked such a question. Bro. McGary is blazing his own way." My brother is mistaken *he* is "blazing" the way for me, and it is a very *crooked* "way"; for, in his own polemical language, "it is the very reverse of the truth"! Never was there anything further from the truth, than the statement that I ever pursued such a course, or a course in the slightest particular like it. Bro. Harding needs to take his own advice, where he says, "we ought to be careful not to bear false witness." Hence I can say to my brother, in no un-

kind spirit, "Therefore thou art inexcusable, O man, for wherein thou judgest another thou condemnest thyself; for thou that judgest doest the same thing"? But who does ask questions "apostolic men did nut ask"? The man who asks, "Are you satisfied with your baptism"? Then, my brother, thou art the man!

But now let's look over his year's work and see what he has accomplished. Although he started out to run counter to the rules of logic, by wanting to deny my negative, instead of trying to prove his own affirmative, he became ashamed of such a course and tied the destiny of his proposition to the proposition that, the three facts of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ constitute the gospel independently and exclusively, so that when the commission says, "Go ye and preach the gospel," it means, in its length, breadth and depth, Go and preach the *three facts*. This position he undertook to prove, by reference to Paul's language in 1 Cor. 15: 1-4. I accepted the issue and replied in my first article, see pp. 8, 9, 10. In that reply I laid a difficulty in his way that he has never even *tried* to remove! But he shut his eyes to this difficulty and went right on asseverating most dogmatically, that Paul defined the gospel to be these *three facts*, and said the Corinthians were saved by this *three fact* gospel. Then I showed that Paul said, in Titus 3: 5, that we are saved by "the washing of regeneration," and that Peter stated the same thing, in different words, when he said, "baptism doth also now save us," see I Peter 3:21; and, as the whole of a thing is equal to the sum of all its parts; and as it is the gospel whole that saves, and as Paul and Peter teach that baptism saves, the gospel sum is not complete till baptism is included! Twice I laid this before him and urged him to deal with it, but he would not, because he *could* not. This, of itself, destroys his position, root and branch! and he certainly knows it, for he has stood before it .so dumbfounded that

the gospel, for they had been preached prior to that verso. Bro. Harding's theory wont fit here; it is too narrow, it is a theological figment, a fossil from sectarian-land, an abstraction of a rabid mind. But here, in this record of Peter's preaching, we find the way that people are baptized into the "one body by the one Spirit," how they are born of water and the Spirit," how they are "cleansed with the washing of water by the word," how they become "children of God by faith in Christ Jesus," how they "obey from the heart that form of doctrine delivered," how they are "saved by the washing of regeneration," how they are "born of the incorruptible seed" and saved by the gospel, how they "OBEY THE GOSPEL." This is just the ground I have contended for.

But Bro. Harding says there is no authority for reimmersing those who were immersed without gladly receiving the word of the gospel of Christ. This authority is a necessary implication, just as much so as is the authority for immersing those who have been sprinkled, or who have fallen off a log into a creek. But even if this were not good enough authority, Acts 10 would be, where some who had been immersed without first receiving this gospel, were taught the way of the Lord more perfectly and baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Bro. Harding says woe be to the man who binds where God has not bound; and I say, amen. And I further say, woo to the man who looses where God has not loosed! May we all walk by the same rule, that rule which has been bound in heaven and earth.

In anything I have said that has wounded my brother, I ask him to forgive me, for I have said it out of zeal for God's truth, and not out of ill-will to him. My confidence in him leads me to think he will come around all right—ere long.

A. McGARY.

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