

the Jews had been heaping their traditions upon the word of God and that in this way it had been nearly buried out of sight. They truly had "made the word of God of none effect by their traditions," and the same was true upon a much larger scale, when Martin Luther commenced his reformation. For centuries and centuries Rome had been piling her errors and superstitions upon the Bible until the world was sunk in the grossest ignorance. The work of protestantism has, therefore, been to dig the Bible up out of the rubbish thus heaped upon it. The process was necessarily a slow one and the work is not yet fully completed. Protestantism necessarily partakes to a certain extent of the errors that belongs to the dark ages, and there never will be that unity so much needed to-day in the protestant world until all that is purely Roman Catholic is purged out of it.

Sprinkling for baptism sprang up in the Roman Catholic church, is, without doubt a relic of the dark ages. The Bible is as silent on it as the grave, and must be given up before the people of God can see eye to eye. Let any honest man whose mind is perfectly free from anything like bias in religious matters, carefully read the Bible through to know the truth on this point and he will come out fully convinced that the Bible teaches nothing but immersion for baptism. The reason why many apparently honest people hold to sprinkling is the cause they are not honest with themselves at this point. They very likely have been taught from their infancy that sprinkling is all right and can be found in the Bible, but they have never taken the trouble to honestly look the matter up. We know of an old gentleman who lived in a community where they were all Pede-baptists and nearly all belonged to the Presbyterian church. One day he happened to get into an argument with a member of the Christian church upon the question of baptism. They argued their respective sides for some time without either being convinced that he was in error. But just before they separated the member of the Christian church said to the Presbyterian I want to make a simple request of you, and I want you to promise me that you will do it. He said he would if he could. Then said the brother I want you when you get home to take your Bible and carefully read it through

noticing every passage where it speaks of baptism, and see how much Scripture you can find that will favor sprinkling. He said he would do it, and the result was that in a few weeks he came out and demanded immersion at the hands of a Christian preacher. He confessed that in carefully reading the Bible through he did not find one line that either favored sprinkling or infant baptism. M.

QUERIES AND ANSWERS.

Bros. Editors:
If the word "church" is a true and correct "Bible name" for a "Bible thing," and certainly Bible readers who only understand the English language will and do use it appropriately; then why do so many use the word "congregation?"
It appears to me that in some things the "distinctive plea" is strained clear of Bible simplicity as well as of the denominations. The name "Christian" for a church certainly implies that there are other churches just as good not Christian.

G. W. POWELL.

ANSWER.

The word "congregation" is used as a synonym of "church." The Greek word *ekklesia*, translated "church" in the New Testament, is defined by Robinson's Greek Lexicon of the New Testament, *a convocation, assembly, congregation, church.* But inasmuch as the word "congregation" is generally used in the Old Scriptures to describe the Jewish nation or assembly, we, as a rule, prefer the word "church" applied to the assembly of the saints.
The word "Christian" is nowhere in the Bible applied to the church, and is not the most happy way of speaking of the churches of Christ.

COQUILLE CITY, OR.,
Dec. 14, 1883.

Bro. Floyd:
Will you please answer through the HERALD the following queries:
1. Does the Bible teach that baptism is a test of obedience?
2. Does the Bible teach that regeneration and baptism are one and the same, and that the word regeneration may be substituted for baptism in the gospel plan?
3. Is regeneration and the new birth one and the same? (If so, explain; if not so, explain).
4. What is the sin against the

Holy Spirit?
5. Is it proper to pray for Christ's kingdom to come? Or has it already come?

These queries were suggested by listening to four sermons preached by a Disciple here and at Harris' Bridge. In No. 1 text there were six steps to the throne. The speaker spiritualized his text and said there were six steps to heaven, namely: faith, repentance, baptism, pardon, perseverance and death. No. 2, text same; spiritualized steps: faith, repentance, regeneration, adoption, pardon, endurance and death.

6. If the same Spirit spiritualized this text, what Spirit was it? for it contradicts itself.

7. Is death a means of grace, and a step to heaven? If so, What will or did become of Enoch and Elijah who were too good to die?

8. Is pardon or justification a means of grace, or the result of obedience to the commands of Christ?

Will you please answer the above queries, as there are many here who do not know the teaching of the Testament on these points, and it will help to place our plea before the people.

Your brother in hope of heaven,

J. P. EASTER.

ANSWER.

1. Not expressly; yet we think that is implied. In the act of baptism the person gives evidence that he is an obedient believer. All of God's commands are, in one sense, tests of our loyalty to him.

2. We think not. The word "regeneration" is found only twice in the New Testament, and it is not used as a synonym of baptism in either passage. See Matt. 19:28; Titus 3:5. In the latter passage baptism is evidently referred to under the figure of a washing bath. But we understand regeneration to include the whole process of turning to God, while baptism is only the bath of that process by which we are saved.

3. Substantially the same, both including the whole process of becoming a new creature in Christ Jesus.

4. We are not expressly told. Our opinion is that in the passage where it is mentioned, it was attributing the power of the Holy Spirit to Beelzebub. This was one manifestation of the unpardonable sin which consists rather in a state of heart utterly beyond repentance, and which manifests itself in vari-

ous ways. See Matt. 12:31-34, Heb. 6:4-6, 10:25-29, 1 John 5:16.

5. Christ's kingdom or church on earth has already come, and hence it is not proper for us to pray that it may come. We can properly pray for God's future and eternal kingdom to come.

6. We do not know the text referred to, and hence, do not understand the meaning of this question.

7. Yes, inasmuch as most people can not enter heaven till after death, and are not prepared to do so if they could. Enoch and Elijah were exception to the rule.

8. Both.

Selections and Comments.

THE CULTURE OF ENGLISH.—The *Christian at Work* gives us these valuable and much needed thoughts on the culture of the English language:

While the cry is going up to the heavens in behalf of the culture of Greek, the plea being that this living dead language is in danger, no one has seemed to think it worth while to say a word in behalf of the culture of English; but oh! how sadly the cry is needed. Why, take the graduating "theologue":—how comes it that he mounts the pulpit and delivers himself of such bad English, his long u's transformed into oo's, the h's knocked out of his which's, which are metamorphosed into wiches, the third day of the week given the nickname of Tooz-day, while involved sentences, the use of the wrong personal pronoun, and such solecisms as "he don't," "every one must mend *their* lives," etc. etc., are to be met with at every turn, and this, too, when he has run the gauntlet in college and seminary of two professors of rhetoric? Are we forgetting our mother tongue? It looks so; but not so did the Greeks, whom so many worship;—they looked carefully after their own and refused to have anything to do with any other tongue. And this deficiency in the cultivation of the English language meets *The Christian at Work* at every turn; and how much trouble it gives us, we suspect only editors know. The simple truth is that the majority of those writing for our columns can not—at least they do not—write the English language with clearness and directness. On the contrary, we have to change nominatives and verbs, sometimes eliminate any number of verbal involutions and rearrange obscure sentences. The desire to write pretty, nevelless English, at the expense of clearness, directness, force, is the bane of the mere literary method, and its evil results show themselves not only among the sophomoric writs, but in the productions of those more experienced, and who out to know