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nonessentials." Their differences as a rule are not about the fundamental principles of the gospel of Christ, but over mere matters of church polity. Hence they can with a good show of consistency unite in their preachers' associations as so many representatives of the "different branches" of the "One Body" and mutually assist one another in building up and perpetuating denominationalism. But what, let us ask, becomes of our distinctive plea when our brethren identify themselves with these meetings? Do they endeavor to show these clergymen that denominationalism is sinful, and that sprinkling and pouring and infant baptism are unscriptural and dangerous, and that they themselves are not members of the Church of God? We apprehend that if these things should be faithfully presented in their Scriptural light, that perfect harmony would not prevail very long in these meetings. If these things are not so presented, then our grand plea is compromised for the sake of working harmoniously with sectarianism. But if they all simply agree to disagree, then they are dishonest with themselves and with their brethren, and have turned traitors to the cause they plead. Furthermore, how can any one meet one day in each week with these denominational preachers and work harmoniously with them, and then conscientiously spend the rest of the week in an effort to overthrow the very things they are seeking to build up? Can we work harmoniously with sin? To say that these preachers are ignorant of their unscriptural teaching and practices does not help the matter, for in this case the duty of our brethren to enlighten them only becomes the more apparent. Of course, if these associations can only induce our brethren to commit themselves and thus put a pad-lock on their mouths, they have gained a point. Otherwise they are not likely to insist on our brethren to become members of them.

Now if we are asked what we would do if invited to become a member of these associations, we answer: If their avowed and practical object is to investigate the Bible with a view to ascertain the whole truth on our points of difference and will admit frank and free investigation to this end, and also in order that we may all find the

true basis of union on the Word of God alone, and will agree to act on their honest convictions, then we will take pleasure in meeting these men in the spirit of a true gentleman and assist them in their deliberations. Otherwise we would be slow to spread our sail to the denominational breeze.

THE CONVERSION OF THE JAILER.

The *Pacific Christian Advocate*, of Portland, is giving the Sunday-school lessons with comments. In the lesson for the 17th inst., on the conversion of the Jailer, Acts 19:25-40, we find the following paragraph:

The baptism of his family. When he had done all he could for the prisoners, "He and all his, straightway" were baptized. How? There is not the slightest allusion to manner. It is very hard work to make immersion here. As in every other instance in the New Testament considerable addition must be made to the Bible before there can be any immersion proved. One fact however is very significant—His whole family—"all his," was baptized with him. Does God recognize the family or only the individual? If he circumcised children into the Jewish church on the faith of the parent and did baptize several households apparently on the faith of the parent it looks something like Infant baptism. It is not certain but that these were all adults and all converted and all immersed but no body would ever guess such a thing from the record. Then he fed these hungry and tired men and himself rejoiced with a new born joy with all his house.

This is a fair sample of the kind of Scripture that is being taught the children of Christian parents who send their children to Methodist Sunday-schools, and yet in some places they persist in sending them. Such teaching may do for that portion of the *Advocate's* readers who do not take their Bibles to the Sunday-school and who do not read them at home; but those who know what it is to read the word of God and how to do it, it will hardly prove satisfactory. Let us look at it.

1. The writer says, "it is very hard work to make immersion here." Why so? Did Christ ever command anything else for baptism, and did the apostles ever teach or practice anything else? If so, will the *Advocate* tell us what it was and where to find it? Does our contemporary dare translate the Greek word *baptizo* sprinkle or pour? Or does he know of a stand-

ard Greek lexicon in the world which so defines it? Besides, did not our Savior when he was baptized, come up out of the water? Mark 1:10. And was he not baptized into (*eis*) the river of Jordan? Did not Philip also take the eunuch down into the water and baptize him, and then bring him up out of the water? Acts 8:36-40. Does not Paul say; "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." Rom. 6:3. You see then that the primitive custom was to take them down into the water and bury them with their Lord in baptism, raise them up and then bring them up out of the water to go on their way rejoicing. So it is not very hard work to make immersion here after all.

"But" says one "they were baptized in the house." Suppose they were, could not they have been immersed in the house? Are not hundreds of people immersed in houses now? But let us see if the jailer was baptized in the house. The text says: "And they spoke unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house." So the preaching was done in his house. Then "he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his straightway." The verb *took* shows a removal of the parties somewhere, whether to some other part of the house or out of it, it does not determine. But "when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them," etc. So then he took them out of the house, and the baptizing occurred between the time he took them out of the house and the time he brought them into the house. Hence the baptism did not take place in the house.

"But there was no water there in which to immerse," says another. What about that river mentioned in the thirteenth verse on the bank of which Paul converted Lydia, and in which he immersed her? Now we leave the *Advocate* to tell us if it seriously thinks the jailer and his household went out to the river at the hour of midnight to have a few drops water sprinkled or poured on their heads.

2. The writer thinks, "If He (God) circumcised children into the Jewish church on the faith of the parent and did baptize several households apparently on the faith of the parent, it looks

something like Infant baptism." But it so turns out, as every Bible reader knows, that God never circumcised children into the Jewish or any other church. The children of the Jews were born into the Jewish church and were hence circumcised because they were already in this church, and that they might not be cut off from it. See Gen. 17:9-14 et al. The faith of the parent had about as much to do with the children getting into the Jewish church as the man in the moon. They were in there because they could not help it. The idea that baptism came in room of circumcision is without the shadow of foundation in the word of God. If God ever baptized any households on the faith of the parent since the foundation of the world or has authorized any one else to do so, we will take it as a great favor if the *Advocate* will tell us in what part of the Word of God such baptism can be found! We know there were no infants in the Jailer's household for the following reasons: (1) Paul and Silas spoke the word of the Lord to all that were in his house. Did they preach the gospel to infants? (2) He rejoiced and believed in God with all his house. Could infants rejoice and believe in God? They were not there, just as many households are now baptized in which there are no infants.

This whole effort reminds us of a Methodist class meeting of which we once heard. As the account runs, the preacher in charge desired to investigate the subject and requested each of his members to bring to the next meeting a passage of Scripture that would prove Infant baptism. The congregation assembled, and the preacher called on the first brother to head his passage. He arose and read, "Then were there brought unto him little children, that he should put his hands on them and pray. . . . And he laid his hands on them and departed thence." Matt. 19:13-15. "That is good," said the preacher. "Any remarks?" At this moment an old brother, whom we will call John Smith, not exactly seeing the point, arose and said: "I see brethren that that passage speaks about the children being brought to Christ that they might receive his blessing, and he prayed, laid his hands on them and blessed them; but it does not say anything about his baptizing them." "True," says the preacher, "but while it does not mention baptism in so many words, yet the