

# **J. R. WILMETH AND T. R. BURNETT**

Debate in 1988

PROPOSITION. — "A belief that baptism is for the remission of sins is essential to its validity." J. R. Wilmeth affirms—T. R. Burnett denies.

## **BRO. WILMETH'S FIRST SPEECH.**

As our aim in this discussion is truth, not victory, we have accepted from our opponent a proposition which, to our mind, does not fully meet the demands of an unbiased purpose to discover the proper position and significance of baptism in the new covenant or gospel dispensation. This proposition we regard as but a redoubt to the main citadel of gospel truth; and since the great Captain of our salvation gave it as part of his plan, we must maintain the integrity of the plan.

We read in Jeremiah 31: 81 where the Lord said he would "make a new covenant \* \* \* not according to the covenant I made with their fathers. \* \* \* This is the covenant that I will make. \* \* \* I will put my law in their inward parts and write it in their hearts, and I will be their God and they shall be my people, and 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 to the greatest of them, says the Lord, for I will forgive their sin and their iniquity will I remember no more."

Jesus, the Savior, speaking on this point, said: "No man can come to me, except the Father which sent me draw him. \* \* \* It is written in the prophets, "And they shall all be taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." John 6: 44-5. Again in the same connection: "It is the Spirit that quickeneth (maketh alive); the flesh profiteth nothing: the words that I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life." Verse 63.

In these sayings the Savior clearly indicates how men are to be drawn to him by the Father, They must hear and learn. In no other way can they come. The words that he spoke must enlighten or make alive. In ignorance of the word of the Lord they cannot come, for "he that would come to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him." Hence Jesus came as a teacher, the great Teacher, teaching with authority and showing that even under the law it was not so much the external

show of obedience or disobedience that commended or condemned the individual in the sight of God, as the purpose or intent of the heart. His teaching, showing that the hatred of a brother is the essence of murder; also, that to look upon a woman with lustful intent makes one an adulterer at heart, makes it clear that God looks rather at the design than at the deed.

This is also clearly demonstrated in his teaching in regard to alms, fasting and prayer. If men give alms, or fast or pray "to be seen of men," the wrong design, they have no reward of their Father in heaven. Such was the Pharisee's mistake. Though he had the law to teach him the proper design of prayer, humiliation, confession of sin, and supplication of mercy, a remission of the same, his design seemed to be to let the Lord know that he was comparatively sinless. So he expressed his gratitude for having been made better than other men. The publican, on the contrary, had the proper frame of mind, the good and honest heart, the receptive soul. He was "the latter justified." He was rewarded of the Father. The Pharisee did not feel the need of God's help or reward, he did not expect any, and God had none for him. If any reward he sought, it was of men.

Christ Jesus did not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance. Mark 2: 17. He shed his blood for the remission of their sins. Mat. 26: 28. It was a necessity in the divine economy that he should suffer and rise again the third day, even that repentance and remission of sins should be preached by his authority among all nations. Luke 24: 46, 7. He told his apostles, "Whosoever sins you remit, they are remitted unto them, and whosoever you retain they are retained." John 20: 23. And he commissioned them saying: "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned"—shall continue condemned, (John 3: 18), not having his sins remitted, because he does not believe the gospel and hence can not obey from the heart its commands or trust its promises—lie manifestly indicated that the gospel to be preached has in it certain facts to produce faith, precepts to direct action, and rewards to induce 'obedience. No

other process is rational and worthy of God, or even of man; hence the Savior said: "Go teach," to produce faith, to induce repentance, to evoke confession, to prepare for baptism, into remission or salvation. No blind blundering into the water of baptism as a saving element, is contemplated in the commission to the apostles. The Lord Jesus that shed his blood "for the remission of sins" authorized the preaching of "remission of sins" on conditions respecting the shedding of his blood; the fact of shedding was in his death; one of the conditions of remission was that the believing penitent "be baptized into his death," where redemption was purchased, where remission is promised. A declared specialty of this condition is that it must be "obeyed from the heart." Rom. 6: 17. To be baptized for some other purpose, as to say to men that one has already received remission, (baptism being "the outward sign of an inward grace" already received and enjoyed,) is as void of scriptural design as was the Pharisee's prayer, and of course can find as little reward with the Father. If the conscience, like that of the Pharisee, is already satisfied as to self, sin, and God, there being no consciousness of past sins unpardoned, and consequently no "seeking of a good conscience towards God;" and as sin can not be washed away as filth of the flesh by mere contact of water, we are forced to the conclusion that such a baptism can have nothing to do with remission, or bringing one into Christ; is not in the name of the Lord Jesus; not being mixed with faith as to his command or promise, is not pleasing to God, as it seeks not his reward, remission; but being without faith as to any divine appointment, is itself a sin—whatsoever is not of faith is sin—that needs remission. Hence its invalidity.

## **BRO. BURNETT'S FIRST REPLY.**

Bro. Wilmeth commences with a complaint at the proposition, as though he had accepted something from his opponent that does not fully express the issue. Whereas, it is the proposition he presented to me, and challenged me to meet him upon, in the oral discussion at Corinth, Ark. He was so valorous on that occasion, that he even proposed to affirm that a belief that the whale swallowed Jonah was essential to valid baptism!

If the proposition looks a little crooked now, it will look a good deal more so when we have put it through the crucible of criticism and shown its deformity. But, (as Abraham Lincoln said,) "the man who likes that kind of a thing, that is about the kind of a thing he will like!" It will be observed that Bro. Wilmeth does not commence his proof by producing a text that makes faith in the design of baptism a condition of baptism, or by giving an example where some inspired teacher required such faith of a candidate before baptism. Like the Methodists when they prove infant baptism, he goes to work to prove something else. He gives us Jer. 31. 31, where God says he will make a new covenant, and put his law in the inward parts, and write it on the hearts, and all shall know the Lord. But who is denying that there must be writing on the heart, or that people must know the Lord before they are baptized? Bro. W. should find a text that says they shall know the design of baptism, and where this knowledge is made a condition of obedience. Nor will he hardly contend that all God's law must be written on the heart before baptism. When we come to the new covenant, and find the fulfillment of this prophecy, we learn how much faith is required in order to valid baptism. "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." This is the faith that qualifies for baptism, and is the faith that has always been required by the Christian people. He next quotes John 6. 45: "Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto me." Let him show that every one must learn of the Father that baptism is for remission of sins

before he can come to Christ, and he will have a point. But there is not an example of this requirement in the New Testament. He next shows that the words of Christ quicken. But what words of Christ are referred to? Let him show that a doctrine in regard to baptism ever quickened any one, and he will have some proof. Peter says, "Who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." This is the word that quickens. He next quotes, "He that cometh to God must believe that he is," etc. But he must find a text that says, "He that cometh to God must believe that baptism is for remission of sins!" Where is the text? Bro. Wilmeth says God looks at the design rather than the deed. We think God looks at both design and deed. But the design of a person in baptism is obedience, while God's design is remission of sins, he being the remitter. A person may obtain all the benefits of baptism without knowing all the design of the remitter. He next comes to the commission, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth (the gospel) and is baptized shall be saved." Bro. W. says it is the design of baptism, and not the gospel, that shall be believed! This, too, on top of his assertion that the gospel furnishes facts to produce faith. He also says that rewards produce obedience. It strikes us that a person who loves the Lord could and would obey him if no reward were offered. But he will hardly contend that remission of sins is the only reward offered in the gospel. He says that "no blind blundering into the water will do for baptism." But who teaches such stuff as that? The next statement is that obedience must be "from the heart." Very well. Let him show that faith in the design of baptism is necessary to obedience from the heart. If a man believes with all the heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and is baptized in his name, he obeys from the heart. His faith is not in the command, but in the commander. Bro. W. seems to think it should be "design of baptism from the heart." He says if a person is baptized for "some other purpose" than that taught in the Scriptures, it is not valid baptism. But there are several purposes in baptism. It is nowhere taught that a person must understand and believe all God's purposes in baptism in order to receive valid baptism. If a person is moved to baptism by any

one scriptural motive, he obeys the commandment. He says if a person's conscience is already satisfied, he can not be baptized. But a person's conscience is not satisfied, else he would not be baptized. He says if a person does not believe that baptism is for remission of sins, his act is not "mixed with faith." His act may not be "mixed with faith" in the design of baptism, but if he has faith in Christ it is mixed with faith in Christ. The whole trouble with people who embrace this new doctrine is, they set up the wrong object of faith. Christ is the object of faith, (and not the design of baptism,) and that is why faith in Christ is made a condition of baptism and salvation, (Acts 8. 37, Acts 16. 31,) and' faith in the design of baptism is never made a condition of baptism or salvation. Bro. Wilmeth's proposition affirms fail a in the design of baptism, but he has written more than eleven hundred words and hag not produced a text that says that "a belief that baptism is for remission of sins is essential to its validity." If there were such a text, he would certainly produce it The Christian faith is embraced in the Christian confession of faith, (Acts 8. 37,) and we are very sure this confession does not embrace Bro. Wilmeth's proposition. If this is the right confession, then Bro. Wilmeth has the wrong faith. If Bro. Wilmeth has the right faith, then we have the wrong confession. The confession must be as long as the faith. Our converts confess that they believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, but we never ask them whether they believe that baptism is for remission of sins. Do we jeopardize their salvation by requiring them to make a confession that does not include all the essential parts of the faith? Here is where Bro. Wilmeth's new doctrine begins to look ragged and unscriptural, and needs a little patchwork. The old confession must be stretched out, or the new faith must be chunked up, so as to make one match the other. At present, the cover does not fit the bed. But we shall see what we shall see.

## **BRO. WILMETH'S SECOND SPEECH.**

For certain reasons we did not take the pains in our first article to define terms, but we now deem it proper, before proceeding further, to give some attention to this matter. The terms, to our mind, seem sufficiently clear, except the expression, "its validity." This is the equivalent of the phrase "valid baptism." We very readily agree that the term baptism means immersion in water. The term valid is properly defined, as follows: "Legally sufficient, good in law, that fills the measure of an authoritative requirement." Hence "valid baptism" must be an immersion that fills the measure of the gospel requirement, or law of the Lord, for this is our accepted standard. This being the case, our work is simply to determine what kind of baptism the gospel requires. This is valid baptism; nothing else is. As we brought forward in our first article an array of scriptures showing the authority for, and the purpose of baptism, we pause to pay respect to our opponent's criticisms of the argument before proceeding with further affirmative proof.

We are glad to see Bro. Burnett pay such respect as his position will allow to our arguments. Of course he can not squarely gainsay plain scripture statements. So he admits "there must be a writing on the heart and that people must know the Lord before they are baptized." But then he says: "Bro. Wilmeth should find a text that says they shall know the design of baptism." One has reason from this statement for the conclusion that Bro. B. thinks a statement stronger proof than demonstration. Jesus' statement, "I will rise again the third day," did not command unquestioning faith with the disciples. But when he showed that he had risen, even doubting Thomas exclaimed, "My Lord and my God!" So we think it better to give our doubting Bro. Burnett some of the many scriptures that show they did know the design of baptism, than to give a mere text to that effect. Now read: "Repent and be baptized everyone of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," "Repent and be converted that your sins may be blotted out," "Arise, be baptized and wash away thy sins." Does Bro. B. deny that these scriptures teach that baptism is for remission of sins? He dare not. Our



affirmation is that these scriptures being an essential part of the faith, and mandatory and prescriptive of duty, they must be believed in order to acceptable obedience in the act prescribed. Is faith at this point a matter of indifference? If they need not be believed, then they may with safety be disbelieved. Will he affirm that disbelief of these scriptures is safe? This is the gist of his denial, let him shoulder the responsibility. Again Bro. B. says: "Let him show that every one must learn that baptism is for remission of sins before they can come to Christ, and he will have a point." There seems to be a concession in this that some "must learn that baptism is for remission of sins before they can come to Christ," but he wants us to bring the proof that "every one must." It is sufficient proof to our mind that all must come in the same way, when the Savior says, "No man cometh unto me except the Father draw him \* \* \* and they shall all be taught of God; every one therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." Let Bro. B. show that some one can come without hearing or learning or believing that baptism is for the remission of sins, and Tie will have a point. The text, please, that says it in just so many words!

But he says further: "There is not an example of this requirement in the N. T.," that "one must learn of the Father that baptism is for remission of sins before he can come to Christ." What of the three thousand on the day of Pentecost? Did not Peter teach them saying, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins?" They heard, they learned, they gladly received the word, they were baptized. What of Saul of Tarsus, to whom Ananias said: "Arise, be baptized and wash away?" He had tarried about three days waiting to learn what he must do to come to Christ. When he learned it, it was to be baptized for the remission of sins. Here are examples, there is the denial; look at that, then look at these.

To get around our argument showing that the perversion of a sacred appointment from its proper purpose has no reward of the Father, he says, "But there are several purposes in baptism." Well, we had failed to discover its power to purpose. We never dreamed

before that baptism per se was pregnant with high purposes. If so, possibly it may justify the untaught, unbelieving and impenitent without any design on their part.

Against our reasoning that belief of what Christ says concerning the duty and design of baptism, as well as concerning anything else, is actual faith in Christ, he says, "Christ is the object of faith (and not the design of baptism,) and that is why we have faith in Christ made a condition of baptism and salvation, and never faith in the design of baptism a condition of salvation. Well we would like to have the text that says, or any number of texts that show, or admit the inference, that "Christ is the object of faith." Of our faith he is the declared author; salvation is the object it sets before us. Why this multiplying of words to darken counsel? Such expressions as "Christ is the object of our faith" and "belief in Christ as a personal Savior" are meaningless and! at least bewildering, if not misleading, to the untaught. The use of such betrays a want of consistent thought and the purpose to impart wholesome information. We have not taught nor thought of any such absurd thing as "faith in the design of baptism." This is Bro. B.'s pet thought and pet phrase. It's one of his hobbies. Nor is it very strange that he should attribute such a thought to us. Since he himself seems to have a sort of Romish faith in the act of baptism as having some sort of mechanical or magical efficacy in it that will free from sin, whether one has any heart in the matter or not. His faith seems to be in the act of immersion. For he insists that one need not be so far taught of God as to know or believe that baptism is the bath of regeneration, or the consummation of the birth of water and the Spirit, by which one enters the kingdom, or justified state; or that it is a means of induction into Christ, or putting on Christ; or that it is anything as a means toward the blotting out of sin; or even that it is "for remission of sins." Seeing he believes in blank baptism, we are not so much surprised that he ascribes to us "faith in the design." The drunk man imagines everybody else drunk. We believe in Christ, not in the act of baptism, nor the design of baptism. But our faith in Christ requires us to accept everything that he has said. Hence we believe that one

must believe the gospel, repent of sin, confess Christ, be baptized for remission of sins, and walk in a new life; but this is not faith in believing, faith in confessing or faith in repentance, as common sense can readily see.

We quote again: "Bro. Wilmeth says it is the design of baptism, and not the gospel that shall be believed." (*Italics ours.*)

Mr. Lincoln's manner of reply suits this best: If a man likes to say this kind of thing, this is the thing he is likely to say.

As opposed to our scriptures showing that a knowledge and belief of the fundamental facts and precepts of the gospel is necessary to the quickening of the soul to spiritual life, and consequently to general obedience in repentance and baptism, he tells us, "Peter says, 'Who according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.' This is the word that quickens." Now it is clear that the apostle's statement is quite intelligible and assuring to those who had obtained like precious faith with himself, through the righteousness of God, according as his divine power had given unto them all things that pertain to life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that had called them to glory and virtue, in which were given unto them exceeding great and precious promises, that by these they might be made partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from corruption that is in the world through lust, but exactly how so much enlightening power is put up in that single sentence, intended primarily, for those who were "established in the present truth," so as to make it "the word that quickens" the sinner to saving action, "doth not yet appear."

The above sentence from Peter and two parts of verses on the eunuch's case, are the sum total of Scripture he has tried to use to prove that men need not know or believe the plain gospel precept, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." But as the latter, more forcibly if possible than the former, yields its strength to our side of the question, we appropriate it an affirmative argument.

In the eunuch we have a devout man who is a reader of the Jewish Scriptures. He is reading in Isaiah of one "led as a sheep to the slaughter." He does not understand, but inquires of Philip. Making occasion of the scripture, Philip preaches to him Jesus, as the Christ of God the one of whom Moses and the prophets wrote; as the one who came in the fulfillment of scripture to enlighten and save men from their sins; who is the true light of the world, lending light to the law and the prophets; who gave his life on the cross a ransom for sinful men; who rose from the dead for their justification; who ascended on high and sent the Holy Spirit on the apostles whom he had commissioned to preach repentance and the remission of sins in his name among all nations; who promised salvation from sin to those who seek the same by submission to his authority in baptism. The eunuch listens, learns, lays hold of the promise. He says, "See, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?" What quickened the man to such desire? What is his design? Why want to be baptized? "The word of the gospel" has been preached—not the mere sad tragedy of the innocent led dumb to the cross, but his glorious resurrection and the glad news—gospel—of salvation, offering remission in the likeness of his death.

Don't deny, Bro. B., when you see the green tree growing, you know there is a root from which it springs. The eunuch is eager, but Philip is cautious. He sounds the depths of his soul for faith unfeigned. "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." There came the response full and clear: "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, the voice from on high, as if his soul had caught up the echo from Jordan's shore, from the walls of Caesarea Philippi, from Pilate's judgment hall, from the open tomb. It's 'the good confession,' the most comprehensive, the most concise, not only the multum in parvo, but the totum in uno (the whole Bible in one verse) of the faith of Christ. Nor can there be occasion or room for one question, to abridge or extend its scope, when the gospel is faithfully preached.

## **BRO. BURNETT'S SECOND REPLY.**

Bro. Wilmeth has tilled seventeen sheets of paper, in the preceding article, but has said very little for his proposition. He should proportion the length of his speeches to the depth. They are too long, and too thin. Chunk them up a little, Bro. W.

He commences by defining the term "validity" to mean "good in law," or "that fills the measure of requirement," hence valid baptism must fill the measure of gospel requirement. But he has not shown in his long speech that the gospel requires a man to believe that baptism is for remission of sins, as a condition of baptism. Hence, he has failed to prove his proposition, according to his own definition. If validity means the measure of the law, and the law does not require faith in the design of baptism, then valid baptism may exist without faith in the design. In view of this fact, we stated that Bro. W. should find a text that teaches, not that persons shall "know the Lord," but that they shall know the design of baptism, in order to come to Christ, and that this knowledge is made a condition of coming. Hence all the texts quoted in his first speech were foreign to the issue. In the present speech he runs off and gathers up a number of texts to prove that the ancient disciples had knowledge that baptism was for remission of sins before they were baptized. But this, too, is foreign to the proposition. He must find proof that a knowledge of the design is a condition of receiving valid baptism. And this is what he has not done and can not do. Our rebaptism champions have a penchant for proving everything except the thing that needs to be proved. Bro. Wilmeth quotes Acts 2, Acts 3, and Acts 22, and asks if Bro. Burnett denies that these texts teach that baptism is for remission of sins? But we are not debating that proposition. He then says: "These texts being an essential part of the faith, they must be believed in order to acceptable obedience." But where did he learn that these texts are an essential part of the faith that must be believed before baptism? Did any inspired teacher require a belief of all that is contained in these texts before he would baptize a convert? Produce the proof. Bro. Wilmeth, Peter made some statements in Acts 2 that he

himself did not understand for eight years afterwards—the calling of the Gentiles. Was there no valid baptism for eight years after Pentecost? In Acts 3 he used this language: "Whom the heavens must receive until the times of restitution of all things." Does Bro. Wilmeth understand what is meant by the "restitution of all things?" Did he understand it before he was baptized? Did the validity of his baptism depend upon this knowledge? If he admits that persons are not required to understand all that Peter said, then he allows a limit to the knowledge, and where shall we draw the limit? If we follow the apostolic model, we will draw the line where Philip drew it when he baptized the eunuch, and make faith in Christ as the Son of God the faith that qualifies for baptism. Our rebaptism friends will not follow this model. It is too short for their new doctrine. In the debate at Corinth, Ark., Bro. W. admitted that sinners were not required to know and believe all the truth in order to baptism, but said they must believe all that is said upon the design of baptism. He was pressed to say whether our converts do understand all the designs of baptism as taught in the Scriptures, and why one design is more important than others? Baptism is said to be "the answer of a good conscience." That is one design. But our brethren are not agreed as to whether it is the answer or the seeking of a good conscience. Some of us do not understand it, for we differ. How then can we receive valid baptism? We are "baptized into Christ." That is another design of baptism. But what does it mean? Many of our converts do not understand it fully. Do they therefore receive invalid "baptism? Peter promised the "gift of the Holy Ghost" to those baptized on the day of Pentecost. That is another design of baptism. But what does it mean? Bro. McGary says it means one thing, and Prof. McGarvey says it means another thing. One of them does not understand it, and has not received valid baptism! We are "buried with him by baptism into death." That is another design of baptism. But what does it mean? Dr. Trott and Bro. McGary and Bro. Burnett are engaged in a debate on this passage. They differ, and some of them do not understand it. They therefore have not been baptized "into death!!" Now, Bro. Wilmeth, you must show how two men can both understand and believe a thing, and yet differ about it, or you must admit that a

knowledge of some of the designs of baptism is not essential to its validity. Will you do it? Then you must show us how a belief of one design is essential to its validity, and a belief of other designs is not essential to its-validity! Here is work for you to do.

Bro. W. says that if the statements of the Scriptures on the design of baptism need not be believed, then they may with safety be disbelieved. That is not a fair statement of the question. There is a vast difference between a failure to understand the meaning of a text, and therefore a failure to believe its statement, and a disbelief of a statement that is understood. Disbelief is a rejection of a statement that is understood. Ignorance of a part of God's design of baptism, is not disbelief of God's word. As has been shown, all of us fail to understand some portions of God's word, and many of us fail to understand some of the designs of baptism, and we are therefore, according to this re baptism doctrine, without valid baptism, and infidels!

In his first article, Bro. W. quoted: "Every man therefore that hath heard and hath learned of the Father cometh unto me." We replied that he must show that every man must learn that baptism is for remission of sins, before he had any proof in that text. He replies that we seem to concede that some (not every one) must learn that baptism is for remission. We concede no such thing, but simply show that the proof he tries to get out of the text is not in it. The text says that all shall be taught, and all must hear and learn, but it does not say that all shall be taught and must learn all the designs of baptism before they can come to Christ. Bro. W. makes light of our statement that there are 'several purposes in baptism,' and says he did not know that baptism had a purpose. Our meaning was that God has several purposes or designs in baptism, and that a sinner is not required to understand all God's purposes before he can be baptized. God is the remitter, and remission of sins is God's design of baptism, while obedience is the sinner's design. You can understand that, can you not? Bro. W. flies clean off his base in replying to our charge that rebaptists set up the wrong object of faith. He challenges us to show-that the Scriptures teach that Christ is the object of faith! We have no trouble to find the text, Bro. W.

"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved." Acts 16. 31. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life." John 3:16. You surely have forgotten what the word 'object' means, Bro. W. Better consult Webster's dictionary. Now find us a text that says, "Believe on the design of baptism, and thou shalt be saved!" We are utterly dumbfounded that Bro. W. should say our statements are 'meaningless' and 'darken counsel,' when he must know they are the express teaching of the Bible. Bro. Wilmeth says: "We have not taught nor thought of any such absurd thing as faith in the design of baptism; this is Bro. B.'s pet thought." Then you are affirming a very absurd proposition, and making some absurd statements. Your proposition affirms faith in the design of baptism, and you are constantly saying that a belief that baptism is for remission of sins is essential to its validity. Why do you quote Acts 2. 38, and say this is 'an essential part of the faith, ' if you are not teaching 'such an absurd thing as faith in the design of baptism?' And why do you accuse us of having 'a sort of Romish faith in the act of baptism, that it will free from sin whether one has any heart in the matter or not, ' if you have no heart in the matter, and no faith in the design of baptism? This is certainly the very 'absurd thing' you are teaching, Bro. Wilmeth! Don't go back on it now, Bro. Burnett has no Romish faith (nor any other sort of faith) in baptism. His faith is in Christ, the author of baptism, and he is confident that all persons who have faith in Christ and obey his command to be baptized will receive all the promises that belong to baptism, though they do not understand all the designs of God in the ordinance. Nor is this what he calls 'blank baptism. ' No baptism is blank that is attended by faith in Christ. A blank baptism is one in which there is no faith in Christ, or the faith has been diverted from Christ to this water idol. If baptism is an object of faith, as well as Christ, why does Bro. Wilmeth not put it into the confession? Why does he ask his candidate if he believes in Christ, and not ask him if he believes that baptism is for remission of sins? According to his theory, the confession does not contain all the faith. Why does he not make a new confession, or add to the old one, as some of his brethren in



this country have done? Let us hear from you on this point, Bro. W. Some of the rebaptist preachers, seeing the inconsistency of using the old confession and preaching the new faith, have adopted the new confession, and now ask, "Do you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and do you believe that baptism is for remission of sins?" This is right and proper.

Bro. W. says: "Belief in what Christ says concerning the design of baptism is actual faith in Christ." And belief of what Christ says concerning anything else is actual faith in Christ, is it not? Then, must the sinner believe all that Christ says about all things before he can be baptized? If you say there is a limit, where will you draw the limit? If you draw the line where the Book draws it, you will come back to the old Christian faith that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God. We have shown you where this faith is made a condition of baptism. You have not shown where faith in a design of baptism is made a condition of baptism. Bro. W. says we have not quoted much Scripture. We do not need much—we are in the negative. We show that the scriptures he quotes do not prove his proposition, and that is sufficient. He closes his speech with a fine peroration on the eunuch's conversion. But this is an unfortunate text for him. The faith required of the eunuch was faith in Christ as the Son of God, and not faith in the design of baptism. His confession is the totum, in uno, so far as faith is concerned, but there is no design of baptism in it. Words are signs of Ideas, and we challenge Bro. W. to find one word in this confession that indicates a thought of the design of baptism. If Bro. Wilmeth had been present in the chariot, and held his present notions, he would have said, "Hold on, Bro. Philip, that man has not confessed enough faith to receive valid baptism. Over in Arkansas and Texas we have made an improvement on the doctrine, and added a little codicil to the old confession, (in order to disfellowship the Baptists,) and are getting things in fine shape. We no longer stand on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, but upon the foundation of McGary and Jackson, and one plank in the platform is water! Stop the eunuch till I catechize him!" If Bro. W. says he would not catechize a candidate for baptism, we ask by what authority he catechizes

persons who would take fellowship in the churches of Christ, as to the amount of knowledge and faith they had in the design of baptism at the time they obeyed the gospel? If it is necessary to catechise Baptists, it is necessary to catechize your own converts, as to whether they have the new faith. For this reason we impeach the rebaptism doctrine. It requires a new faith and a new confession of faith, and new terms of fellowship in the churches of Christ. It requires us to believe that a new church was established at Brush Run, Pa., in 1813, and that the old church of Christ failed before the birth of Alex. Campbell! If Bro. Wilmeth says he does not hold this point of the doctrine, we challenge him to tell us where the church was when Alex. Campbell was born! The Scriptures say it, should 'stand forever,' and 'have no end,' and 'never be destroyed,' and if the Scriptures tell the truth this rebaptism doctrine is false. Not one of the old pioneer fathers believed his proposition, when baptized, and hence did not receive valid baptism; and if they constituted the church of Christ, there was not a man in it that had valid baptism! Tell us, Bro. W., if the Lord authorized unbaptized sinners to re establish his church? Did he go into the devil's kingdom and commission Alex. Campbell and Walter Scott and John Smith and Jacob Creath to administer baptism, and initiate people into the kingdom of God? Here is work for you to do, and a good deal of it, and we pause until you try your hand upon it.

## **BRO. WILMETH'S THIRD SPEECH.**

Bro. B. takes comfort in the fact that he is in the negative, where he does not need much Scripture. We, on the contrary, "delight in the law of the Lord."

But why is he not in the affirmative? The reason is obvious: he knew the scriptures were wanting to support the affirmation his position requires. So, true to the instincts of a shrewd debater, he dodged the responsibility and forced us to affirm a negative or forego the opportunity to tell some wholesome truth and disabuse the minds of his readers as to certain misrepresentations — unwitting or otherwise—which have found currency in the MESSENGER and the Courier concerning a large class of disciples in Texas and elsewhere, whom these Christian journals, in the free exercise of their charity and courtesy, have seen lit to denominate rebaptists, hobbyists and heretics.

We call attention again to the good confession, for we regard it as the "key to the situation," the keynote of the faith that fits for valid baptism. It came down from on high as the plaudit of the Father upon the submission of his Son to the symbol of death to sin and rising again to righteousness. It is the morning star of the faith of Christ, the alpha and omega of the Christian profession. Its rising beam lights the whole horizon of hope in Christ.

"Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God; and every one that loveth him that begat, loveth also him that is begotten of him." He that loves God loves Christ; he that believes God, believes Christ. Yet the Jew believes in God, but believes not that Jesus is the Christ. How is this? Though the Jew believes a great deal concerning God and many things God has said, he does not believe 'the witness of God which he hath testified of his Son. He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself.'" What witness? Let Paul answer: "The word is nigh thee, even in thy heart and in thy month; that is, the word of faith which we preach, that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the

dead, thou shalt be saved." This is the confession, in substance, that Peter made and that Philip required as a test for baptism. What is its scope? It is the whole gospel in a nutshell. It embraces not only a declaration of hearty belief of all that has already been learned of Jesus, but a solemn pledge of hearty acceptance of all that may yet be learned of him. No one is prepared to make it till he has heard the story of the Son of man and Son of God, how he came in fulfillment of prophecy, shed his blood for sinners, rose again for their justification, ascended on high, and confirmed the word of reconciliation through the apostles by the Holy Spirit sent upon them as their guide. Their words then are the words of the Spirit. Through them the word of the gospel must be heard to be believed. The Savior prayed for all that should believe on him through their word. The main thing in this word that made it glad news, or gospel, was the offer of salvation. This gave it character and name. No one can preach the gospel without telling how to be saved from sin. There is much in the tragical story to impress and sadden the heart, still it takes the gracious proposal of terms of reconciliation to inspire emotions of gladness and aspirations for peace. This the gospel did wherever received into a good and honest heart. It is only upon this presumption that reason can see why the eunuch should ask to be baptized, or rejoice after the act. What design? What motive could move him to desire baptism if Philip had not informed him it was the passage to the remission of sins? But mere design and desire for remission are not enough to give validity to baptism. The design, desire, purpose, motive must spring from a hearty faith in him who purchased remission with his blood and made the offer to sinners upon condition of submission in faith to the form of his death. Many a man says, "I believe Jesus Christ is the son of God," when he has no adequate conception of his Messiahship, or Mediatorship between God and sinners. He does not regard Jesus Christ as the author of the faith through which men must be saved from sin.

He rather regards him as a good and influential attorney, ever ready to present and urge the approval of all sorts of claims from all sorts of sinners. Now we insist that such a vague notion of

Christ is not genuine scriptural faith—has not come through the words of the apostles. True faith in Christ (belief with all the heart) accepts the entire truth of Scripture concerning salvation from sin; the claim of authority, the precepts to "be obeyed, and promises to encourage obedience. Bro. B.'s objection seems to be at the one point baptism; this step, he insists, need not be a step of faith. What then? Is there intrinsic efficacy in the ritualistic use of water and words to cleanse from sin as there is in the ordinary use of water and soap to cleanse from material filth? But Bro. B. tries to escape this horn of his dilemma by devising other designs for baptism. He gives us four: (1) 'Into Christ, ' (2) 'Into death, ' (3) "A good conscience," (4) "'The gift of the Holy Ghost.'" We admit them to be incidents or consequents on the right line. They form with the plainly revealed purpose—to reach remission, what mathematicians call a straight line; which, if produced to eternity would never intersect or give a tangent at any point; hence one and the same line. But let us see whether A. Campbell was able to find any other design. He says, (C. on. B. 252,) "Now, if there be but one baptism, and if it appear that both the New Testament dispensations of baptism, by John and by the apostles, clearly affirm a connection between baptism and remission of sins—must it not follow that the only divinely-instituted baptism is for the remission of sins? It may, however, tend to the confirmation of halting between two opinions, to enquire whether there be any other connection between baptism: and anything else noted in the Christian Scriptures, and, if so, of what nature and kind it is? 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 remission of sins." Then, after a strong array of scriptures: "Evident, then, is it, that there is no specific design on account of which any one can constitutionally be baptized, except it be for remission of sins previously committed. We are commanded! to be baptized for the remission of sins—not for the remission of 'original sin,' not for the remission of sins yet to be committed or in advance; but for the remission of sins that are past."

Bro. B. seems not to object to our preaching plainly the action of baptism, and even allows it a matter of importance that one should understand and believe that it is immersion-much water and for no particular purpose, what a "watery idol!"; but this thing of preaching so plainly the design of the ordinance as to leave the immersed of the denominations, who have received it without any faith toward God as to its place or purpose, clearly without any assurance of remission, is the offence that arouses his righteous indignation We humbly judge that the design is its sole merit. Take away this and the "mode" becomes a meaningless mockery, a useless wetting. Hear Bro. Campbell: "The design of this institution has long been thrown in to the shade by the wordy and impassioned controversy about what the action is, and who may be the proper subjects of it. Now, it must be confessed that whatever importance there may be in settling these questions, that importance is wholly to be appreciated by the design of the institution. This is the only value of it The question concerning the value of any action is incomparably superior to the question, what is the act itself for to the question, who may perform it? or upon whom may it be performed? We are therefore, induced to believe that the question now before us is the all interesting important—indeed, the transcendent question in this discussion." As to the value of other baptisms, he says, "Baptists, too, borrowing every thing from their Pede-baptist brethren but the subject and action of baptism, have reduced it to a mere form of making the Christian profession — door into their church. But when in they harmonize in everything with those without the pale of their communion, orthodox in their opinions of the true theory of Christian doctrine. So that in all these parties, there is no true and scriptural dispensation of Christian baptism. As we have 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 of pardon-any other baptism is a human invention of no value; wanting, as it does, the sanction of the Lord Jesus." This is our position strongly stated Now if, as Bro. B. affirms, "Not one of the old pioneer fathers believed this proposition, when baptized, and hence did not receive valid baptism" — faith being a prerequisite

according to our proposition, — did Campbell himself dig the pit into which the fathers fell? or was the pit already there as clearly revealed by the light of Scripture and they being drunk on the wine of Babylon staggered into it, and though sufficiently recovered at length to see it was the pit of condemnation, were still in such a state of sottish stupor, they never sought the gospel way out? Even if this should be granted, like that certain rich man, they failed not to utter their warning to their brethren left behind, saying, "A baptism for sins pardoned, and baptism for sins to be pardoned, or for no pardon of sins at all, past, present, or future, can not be regarded as one and the same baptism." As we have, then, but one baptism, and that baptism is for remission of sins—to give us, through faith and repentance a solemn pledge and assurance of pardon, any other baptism is a human invention of no value, wanting as it does the sanction of the Lord Jesus. But Bro. B. thinks such human invention will answer in the place of Bible baptism, and reviles us much because we refuse to walk in the same pernicious way. We can much better afford to "bear his baseless denunciation and vituperative twaddle about the "rebaptists," having a "a new creed," "catechizing their converts," "holding a coroner's inquest," etc., etc., than to pervert the gospel, or in any way become a party to a very plausible and popular delusion that confuses the well meaning and simple, and that tends to doubt, dissension, and shipwreck of the faith. And the well informed are aware that Bro. B.'s cry against us is but the old story of the dog barking at his own shadow.

## **BRO. BURNETT'S THIRD REPLY.**

Bro. Wilmeth says he "delights in the law of the Lord." If so, he ought to be satisfied to make no conditions of "baptism not required by the law of the Lord.

He says he had to take the affirmative, in order to get a debate, but that I am properly in the affirmative. No sir. He brings a new doctrine and practice, and I simply require him to affirm what he reaches. He says it is a negative proposition. I can see nothing negative about it. It simply affirms that "a belief that baptism is for the remission of sins is essential to its validity." This is what the rebaptist sect preaches all over the land. I have no doubt that he is growing tired of it, but he must not go back on it now. When he fails to sustain the proposition, and gives up the question, then I will take the affirmative and show that a belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is the faith that qualifies for baptism. I have always been ready to affirm my teaching and practice. And I will have no trouble to find the chapter and verse.

Bro. Wilmeth returns to the eunuch's confession, and pays it is the alpha and omega, and embraces everything in the gospel system. He forgets that words are signs of ideas, and that when there are no words there are no ideas. The confession of the eunuch embraces all the gospel faith, but it does not embrace all the gospel system. What part of it embraces the design of baptism? We call it a confession of faith, because it embraces the faith necessary to valid baptism. Bro. Wilmeth asks what could have urged the eunuch to demand baptism, if he had not learned some of the promises of the gospel? We admit that he may have learned some of the promises, and that it is right to set these promises before sinners as incentives to action, but it does not follow that a sinner must know every promise before he can acceptably obey. If there are ten promises in the gospel system, and a sinner acts upon six of them, and does not understand the other four, is not his action valid? This point was made in a former speech, but Bro. Wilmeth strangely passed it by without notice. If a sinner is moved to



baptism by any one scriptural motive, it is valid and scriptural baptism. If all the scriptural motives are required, then none of us has received valid baptism. How do we know that our candidates are impelled by all the scriptural motives? But Bro. Wilmeth will not contend that his converts understand all the designs, of baptism. Then they are not moved by all the designs. We pressed him on this point before, but he has a way of not noticing such points as he can not meet. We urge him again to tell us whether his converts understand all the designs of baptism, and why valid baptism depends on one design and not on others?

Bro. Wilmeth says: "True faith in Christ (belief with all the heart) accepts the entire truth of Scripture concerning him." Then a candidate for baptism must understand all that the Scriptures say concerning Christ, before he can be baptized! Bro. Wilmeth, do you not know that this great amount of knowledge is not required of a candidate for baptism? You do not yourself understand all that the Scriptures say concerning Christ. You have learned something since your baptism, and you do not know it all yet. Will you go and be rebaptized? Better wait till you get it all! But seeing he has cut off more land than he can cultivate, in this wild statement, he adds a modifier: "Especially that which he has said concerning salvation from sin, the claim of authority, the precepts to be obeyed, and promises to encourage obedience." Then a sinner must understand and believe all that Christ said concerning salvation from sin, all that he claimed in the way of authority, and the promises connected with obedience! Why then, Bro. Wilmeth, do you not put all that in the confession of faith? Verily, you will have a creed longer than the Thirty-nine Articles or the Five Points of Calvinism! You know that all this knowledge is not in the Christian confession, and you know that not a single candidate you ever baptized understood or believed all that Christ said about salvation, about his authority, and about the promises of the gospel. This wild break shows to what extremes a foolish and unscriptural theory will drive a sensible man. He says: "Bro. Burnett's objection seems to be at the one point baptism; this step he insists need not be a step of faith." Now, Bro. Wilmeth, when did Bro. Burnett say such a thing as

that? Did we not say emphatically that "baptism is a step of faith, (faith in Christ, not baptism,) and that no baptism was a blank baptism that was accompanied by faith in Christ? And did you not say that you held "no such absurd thing" as faith in baptism or the design of baptism? At the present time it seems convenient for you to say that because we hold that a person may be baptized without believing one of the designs of baptism, we hold that baptism is not a step of faith! What are you debating about, anyhow?

He next quotes Alex. Campbell to show that baptism has only one design—for remission of sins. Bro. Campbell is very good authority with Campbellite, but we place Paul above Campbell. Paul says there is more than one design of baptism, and Bro. Wilmeth admits that Paul is right. Then why quote Campbell? But 'Campbell did not say that "for remission" is the human design of baptism. He was talking of God's design, and as God is the remitter his design is remission of sins. Will Bro. Wilmeth take Campbell all the way through? He fought the rebaptism hobby of his day with all his might. A certain McGary named Dr. Thomas arose in the east, and led away some disciples, and Bro. Campbell had sharp contention with him. Only a few weeks ago we printed in this paper an article from his pen, in which he said that baptism administered by Baptists, to persons who did not understand that baptism was for remission of sins, was valid baptism! How do you like your witness, Bro. Wilmeth? But as you can not prove your doctrine by the Bible, we will let you prove it by A. Campbell. So go ahead. We admit, with Bro. Campbell, that there is only one baptism, and that 'for the remission of sins, ' yet we hold that all persons (believers) baptized in the name of Christ are baptized 'for remission of sins, ' (that being God's design of the ordinance,) although the persons may not know this design of God at the time of their baptism.

Bro. Wilmeth attempts to dodge the point, that there are six designs of baptism, by saying that five of them are only "incidents or consequents on the right line." Where did he learn that? Why not say that the "answer of a good conscience" or the "gift of the Holy Spirit" is the real design, and "remission of sins" is only an

"incident or consequent on the right line" that can not of itself "form a tangent?" This is a multiplication of words to darken counsel, when there is nothing to meet the argument! We show that there are six designs of baptism, and that our converts do not understand all of them, hence valid baptism does not depend upon a knowledge of all the designs of baptism, else we have no valid baptism among us. Bro. W. singles but one design, (and that God's design,) and says if the sinner does not understand that design he can not receive valid baptism. We ask him why a knowledge of one design is more important than a knowledge of other designs, but he does not answer. The salvation of the hobby depends upon a sublime silence at this point!

Bro. Wilmeth says that Bro. Burnett thinks it important to preach the action of baptism plainly, and that it is necessary that people understand and believe that it is immersion. Yes, people have to perform the action of baptism, and if they do not understand what the action is, how shall they perform it? We also preach the designs of baptism plainly, as incentives to action, but do not claim that all the designs must be understood before one can perform the action. If the action is not understood, it can not be performed at all; but as there are both human and divine designs in baptism, a person may be baptized without understanding all of the divine designs. He next adds: "We humbly judge that the design is its sole merit." He says design, (singular,) as if it had only one design, and then says that if a person is baptized "for no particular purpose" it is a useless wetting. But who claims such a baptism as that? Who contends that persons baptized without any motive at all receive valid baptism? Bro. W. can not meet our true position here, and goes off and erects a man of straw, and makes war on that. Who can not whip a man of straw? The persons that we claim are validly baptized, Bro. Wilmeth, and that you wish to rebaptize, are persons that were baptized to 'obey God, ' to 'answer a good conscience, ' and were not therefore without motive.

He says Bro. Burnett has invented a good deal of 'vituperative twaddle' about a new creed, and a new confession, and a catechism, and a coroner's inquest, etc., but ho (an bear the

'baseless denunciations, ' knowing that it is only 'a dog barking at his shadow. ' Why do you not show the dog that it is only a shadow, Bro Wilmeth? Why do you not show us that you have no new creed, and no new confession, and no catechism, and no coroner's inquest, and no new church that commenced with Alex. Campbell? We are anxious to meet you on these points, and your friends in Texas are looking longingly toward the hills of Arkansas, to see if any help will come to them in their great need. You must come up to the work in your next, and give us something on the proposition. Thus far you have scarcely touched the question. Tell us about the confession, and how you get the new faith into the old confession! Tell us by what authority you hold a coroner's inquest upon the body of a person who wishes to take fellowship in a church of Christ!! And by all means tell us where the church was when Alex. Campbell was born !!! We have called upon the rebaptists of Texas many times for an answer to this question, but they have never answered. You are a scholar and a historian, Bro. Wilmeth, and we demand an answer at your hands. If you know where the church was when Alex. Campbell was born, tell us at once. If you think it was utterly destroyed, as your doctrine requires, and that an unbaptized sinner set it up and reestablished it, we wish to measure arms with you on that part of the field. Do not pass this by in silence as you did before, for there are thousands of brethren anxious to see you meet the issue.

#### BRO. WILMETH'S FOURTH SPEECH.

We think it proper to produce, in his own language, the substance of Bro. B.'s last reply. Here it is:

"Tell us about the confession! Tell us by what authority you hold a coroner's inquest upon the body of a, person who wishes to take fellowship in a church of Christ! And by nil means tell us where the church was when Alex. Campbell was born!"

The only points made in this are the exclamation points. The climax is reached thus: (1) a false insinuation, one point! (2) a burlesque of his own practice transferred to us, two points!! (3) His own sectarian assumption that the validity of our baptism is

derived from the Baptist denomination through Campbell and not from Christ through the belief of the truth, three points!!! Yet notwithstanding this assumption, so destructive to the church, he tells in the same paper: "There were churches during the first sixteen centuries that held to the baptism of believers. \* \* \* Those ancient churches called themselves churches of Christ and their members Christians and held the Bible as a rule of faith, and rejected human creeds, and taught baptism for the remission of sins, (*italics ours,*) communicated on the first day of the week, and had a plurality of "elders in the churches." And he should have added, were persecuted and called "anabaptists" (repapists) by the enemies of the truth. These were certainly our ancestors, for they are called by the same name we are called and for the same cause. So the church was still in the world, and still the light of the world, holding forth the form of sound words and contending for the one faith and the one baptism, in the name of one Lord.

We are happy to see Bro. B. making some concessions in favor of the truth. It is a favorable indication; for he once declared he would "make no such concession" as that even "some must know the design of baptism." He now admits that the eunuch may have known some of the promises of the gospel, and that it is right to set these promises before the sinner as incentives to action. He says, "We also preach the designs of baptism plainly, as incentives to action. " "Further, we admit, with Bro. Campbell, that there is only one baptism, and that for remission of sins; 'that being God's design, of the ordinance."

This is in (he right direction. If he had said this and' left some other things unsaid, we should have Considered him well nigh recovered from the blinding effect of the denominational delusion. But he goes on to say: "As there are both human and divine designs of baptism a person may be baptized without understanding all the divine designs. If there are ten promises in the gospel system, and a sinner acts upon six of them, and does not understand the other four, is not this valid baptism?"

From all this we gather: (1) It is right to set the promises of the gospel before the sinner. (2) It is right to preach "the design of baptism." (3) The one baptism is for the remission of sins. (4) The remission of sins is God's design of the ordinance. (5) One must be moved to baptism by some scriptural design in order to be validly baptized. (This by previous admission.) (6) "There are both human and divine designs in baptism." (7) Six out of ten, or 60 per cent, of God's promises is enough to be believed to make one's action valid. On the first five of these propositions we are agreed.

Concerning the sixth we may say it is not logical to say designs in baptism, being a mere act, it can not design or purpose; neither can it affect any one morally or spiritually only as its place and purpose. In the Christian institution is perceived, by the truth concerning it being understood and believed. God gave the ordinance of baptism for a specific purpose, clearly revealed in his word. This purpose we are accustomed to call its design. It pleased God to mark by this very strikingly significant and symbolical ordinance the point to which sinners, quickened by the truth to a sense of their condemned condition, must come in order to be made free from sin. The angel said of Jesus before he was born, "He shall save his people from their sins." John said, "Behold the lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world." To the Jews that believed on him, the Savior said, "You shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free;" and to his apostles, "Whose ever sins you remit, they are remitted unto them." "Preach the gospel to every creature, he that believeth (the gospel) and is baptized shall be saved" (from past sins.) And the apostle Peter preached avoiding to the commandment saying, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." This is the one purpose which the Lord ordained, revealed, commanded. Nor has any one ever been commanded by divine authority to be baptized for any other purpose. However it may be expressed, as: "That your sins may be blotted out," or, "and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord," or "for the remission of sins," it is one and the same divine thought communicated to the sinner for his enlightenment, guidance as to his own condition and needs and purposes and approval. And until one can be made to appreciate

this thought he is unfit for gospel favor. The realization of remission is impossible to him who feels not the condemnation of sin and seeks not the justification of God. And it is marvelous to see one put to such straits to defend error, as to concoct out of the concomitants or consequences of the one specified design of baptism, the subterfuge of a number of different designs, in order to depreciate or displace the one purpose which the Lord assigned it. For "baptized into Christ," "baptized into his death," "buried with him by baptism into death," rising to the new life, and attaining the "answer of a good conscience toward God," are simply the consistent and inseparable concomitants of the one divinely dictated design, "for the remission of sins." And these several side-lights of circumstance are no more different designs of baptism than are the milestones along the highway different branches of the same road. It should be borne in mind that these are epistolary allusions based upon the assumed intelligence ('Know ye not?' assumes ye do know,) of the disciples as to the nature of the process by which they had passed from death in sin to life in Christ. And just as Israel, when menaced by Pharaoh's impending hosts, was commanded to "stand still and see the salvation of the Lord" that they might know and never forget the purpose of this passing under the cloud and through the sea—being thereby 'baptized unto Moses'—even their deliverance from their previous oppressors into the liberty of God and mediatorship of Moses, in like manner also, under Christ, that sinners may know and not forget the means of their purging from past sins, by the 'obedience of faith' to the form of Christ's death and resurrection, the divine command comes, backed by 'all power in heaven and earth,' "Repent and be baptized every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins." For such is the reasoning of both Paul and Peter, as every thoughtful Bible reader must have observed.

That there are many "human designs," or properly, humanly devised baptisms, as, to get. into a denomination, to declare that pardon has been obtained by penitence, prayer, and human intercessions, etc., etc., we can not deny, but why any one

professing faith in Christ should apologize for these to the disparagement of that which is admitted to be "God's design," we can not see. Is it because they will not accept his truth, God has sent them strong delusion?

For they are even pushed to adopt the boldest device of the devil, and virtually say, "Yea hath God said, 'Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins' but ye shall not surely be damned though ye believe not this precept for God doth know ye shall receive remission in baptism whether ye appreciate his proposal of pardon or not." Thus is the same old diabolism that deceived our parents put forth, in all its ethical force, under the tempting title of "our plea."

As to ignoring forty per cent, of God's promises, neither Paul nor James justifies the thought. He is not a diligent seeker that satisfies himself with the knowledge, belief, or practice of sixty percent, of the precepts and promises that pertain to his salvation. He that offends in one point is guilty of all. He that breaks the least command, and teaches men so, is called least in the kingdom.

Our quotations from Campbell had the desired effect,, it cast Bro. B. off from his highest traditional authority. And this is all the authority he has for his theory except the paraphrased passage from Gen. 8, already quoted. Campbell was his highest authority, and Campbell's "Christian Baptism" the highest authority in Campbell! Having shown by this that Campbell did teach baptism for the remission of sins in the strongest terms possible, and must have had this faith when he was baptized, else was a hypocrite, we have at least ruined him as a hobby for Bro. B. to ride in his defense of denominational baptisms. But before leaving the saddle, he roweled Campbell to make him say. "Baptism administered by Baptists, to persons who did not understand that it was for remission of sins, was valid baptism." We have nob found the saying in Campbell's writings. But we find this: "Paul assures us there is but one Christian immersion—'one Lord, one faith, one baptism.' Now, if our baptism is for any other end or purpose than



that to which Paul submitted, it is another baptism, as much, as bathing for health is different from a Jewish ablution for legal uncleanness or impurity. The action has a meaning and a design; and it must be received in that meaning and for that design, else it is another baptism."— Campbell & Rice debate, page 489.

The reader ran now see whether "Campbell was talking of God's design," as Bro. B. saw fit to say, or of the sinner's design being formed and directed by the divine-precept.

Before closing this article we must give Bro. B. the dialectic dose with which Bro. Jones salivated him so to speak, at Corinth. Faith in Jesus Christ is essential to valid baptism.

Faith in Christ includes belief of what he says.

Therefore a belief of what he says is essential to valid baptism.

These premises being unquestionably true, the conclusion must follow. Again:

A belief of what Jesus says is essential to valid baptism.

Jesus says baptism is for the remission of sins.

Therefore a belief that baptism is for the remission of sins is essential to valid baptism.

That he says in effect that baptism is for remission of sins, is proved by Mark 10: 16 & Acts 2: 38. So the conclusion is unavoidable. We hope to conclude the argument in our next; then if BRO. B. will defend his practice by affirming: A denominational immersion, with which the one immersed is satisfied, is

valid baptism, we will deny.

## **BRO. BURNETT'S FOURTH REPLY.**

We will commence our reply by taking the "dialectic dose" which Dr. Wilmeth borrows from Dr. Jones of Corinth. When doctors give physic, it generally salivates the patient, but this Arkansaw dose salivated the doctors! At, least that is what the brethren at Corinth said about it. Here it is:

"Faith in Jesus Christ is essential to valid baptism; faith in Christ includes belief of what he says; therefore a belief of what he says is essential to valid baptism."

"A belief of what Jesus says is essential to valid baptism; Jesus says baptism is for the remission of sins; therefore a belief that "baptism is for remission of sins is essential to valid baptism."

Now try this:

A belief of what Jesus says is essential to valid baptism Jesus says the whale swallowed Jonah. Therefore a belief that the whale swallowed Jonah is essential to valid baptism!

Now try this:

A belief of what Jesus says is essential to valid baptism. Jesus says Herod is a fox. Therefore a belief that Herod is a fox is essential to valid baptism!

Now try this:

A belief of what Jesus says is essential to valid baptism. Jesus says all that is written in the New Testament. Therefore a belief of all that is written in the New Testament is essential to valid baptism!

Now try this:

A belief of what Jesus says is essential to valid baptism. Jesus says some things in the 24th chapter of Matthew" that Drs. Jones and Wilmeth do not understand or believe. Therefore Drs. Jones and Wilmeth have not received valid baptism!

At this point the two Arkansaw doctors became salivated, and threw up the medicine! They began to see what the audience saw, that they had mistaken a sillygism for a syllogism! The fallacy lurks in the major premise—"A belief of WHAT Jesus says. " They admitted that a candidate for baptism was not required to believe all that Jesus says in the New Testament before he can be baptized. But they shifted the point, and said he must believe all that is said on the design of baptism. We met this, by showing that there are six designs of baptism, and very few of our candidates understand all the designs. Even Drs. Jones and Wilmeth do not understand all the designs, even today, for they differ in regard to some of the designs! We pressed the point, as to why a belief of one design is essential to valid baptism, and belief of other designs is not essential. The same point has been urged in this controversy, and has received no solution. Do you yield the issue, Bro. Wilmeth? You might as well do it. Bro. W. has given up the point, that faith in Christ includes a belief of all that Christ says. He has also virtually yielded the point that it includes a belief of all that Christ says on the design of baptism, for he knows that hardly two of our preachers and writers agree as to all the designs of baptism. Now if we must draw a limit, where shall we draw the line? What is faith in Christ, that qualifies for baptism? The Book says a belief that Jesus Christ is the Son of God is the faith required. Will Bro. W. stand by the Book, or will he stand by the hobby?

It is amusing to see Bro. W. frame a proposition for us to affirm. "A denominational immersion!" He ought to know that we care nothing for a "denominational immersion." If there be such a thing, it is certainly invalid No. 2, the 'coroner's inquest, ' he meets by calling it a 'burlesque of his own practice. ' But Bro. W. knows that his opponent has no such practice. When an immersed believer comes forward to enter the fellowship of a congregation, the writer of this never catechizes him in regard to his baptism. There is no scriptural authority for such practice. The rebaptist preachers have borrowed it from their Baptist neighbors, and have put it in operation all over Texas and Arkansas. Bro. Wilmeth can not defend it, and will not attempt it. Bat he should meet it like a man,

or he should quit the practice. Here we score another indictment against the rebaptism hobby—the unscriptural 'coroner's inquest!'"

No. 8, 'Where was the church when Alex. Campbell was born?' he labels: 'His own sectarian assumption that the validity of our baptism is derived from the Baptist denomination through Alex. Campbell. ' You miss the point entirely, Bro. Wilmeth. It is not the derivation of baptism, but the existence of the church. The Scriptures say that the kingdom of Christ should 'stand forever, ' should be an 'everlasting kingdom, ' should 'have no end, ' should 'never be destroyed. ' If these statements be true, it was not destroyed before the birth of Alex Campbell. If your doctrine be true, and there was no valid baptism where the person baptized did not believe that baptism was for remission of sins, then valid baptism had ceased and the kingdom had failed. We ask you to point out a body of people on earth that baptized persons 'for remission of sins' in the sense of your proposition at the time Alex. Campbell was born. If there was no such body of people, where was the church? We ask you to meet this difficulty like a man, and you dodge around it by calling it a 'sectarian assumption!' Shades of McGary and Jackson, come to the rescue!! The perpetual existence of the church is not a sectarian assumption, Bro. Wilmeth, but a Bible statement. Will you destroy the Bible to save your hobby? But Bro W. takes shelter behind the statement of Bro. Burnett, that there were churches during the first sixteen centuries that 'taught baptism for the remission of sins, ' etc., and he is 'happy to see Bro. Burnett make some concessions in favor of the truth. ' A little too fast, Bro. Wilmeth. You forget that Alex. Campbell was not born in the sixteenth century! His reformatory work did not begin till 1812, so you have a gap of some two hundred years between the Waldenses and Brush Run, Pa.! How do you bridge the gap? How do you 'clasp hands over the bloody chasm?' Yes, here is the bloody chasm in which the whole rebaptism fraternity is engulfed forever! You have to admit that during a long period the church was composed of persons who were not baptized 'for remission of sins' as you understand it, or you have to admit that the church failed during that period. One

admission kills the rebaptism doctrine, the other kills the Bible! There are two long horns to this dilemma, Bro. Wilmeth. One gores to death the rebaptism hobby, the other gores to death the truth of the Bible! Which horn will you take? You can not escape by calling it a 'sectarian assumption.' We are not going to let you dodge out of it that way. You know we have never found a rebaptism advocate that would meet us on this issue, fid we intend that you shall meet it, or go down in an everlasting defeat. If you can not meet it, Bro. Wilmeth, come out and confess it like a man, and throw down your hobby and return to the old foundation of eternal truth. Did the church commence at Pentecost and have a continued existence till the birth of A. Campbell, or did It commence at Brush Bun in 1812? Is it a new sect, a new sprout, or la it the old institution established by Christ and his apostles, which should 'never be destroyed?' You know the anecdote of the mulatto boy, who said he didn't have any father and didn't have any mother, and that somebody "just put up a job on me." Have you any ecclesiastical ancestry, Bro. Wilmeth? any pedigree? any line of succession? Or did somebody 'put up a job' on you in 1812? Tell us how you connect Pentecost and Brush Hun, Pa. Did a few unbaptized sinners, in the devil's kingdom, establish the church of Christ at Brush Run in 1812? If you can see no points in these questions but the interrogation points, we will knock the scales from your intellectual eyes until you shall have a better vision. See? The consequences of a doctrine are as true as the doctrine, audit' the consequences of the rebaptism doctrine involve thy extinction of the church for a long period, and the falsity of the Bible, the rebaptism doctrine is false. Here we score another indictment against the rebaptism hobby.

We have thus far presented three indictments against the proposition in debate, each of which convicts it of capital offence against divine truth, and we have two other presentments yet to return. We number as follows:

A new faith, and a new confession of faith.

A coroner's inquest, or new terms of fellowship in the church of Christ.

Failure of the church before the birth of Alex. Campbell, and the establishment of a new church at Brush Hun, Pa., and a falsification of the Scriptures, which way the church should 'never be destroyed. '

A new gospel, a new definition of the gospel, a new obedience of the gospel.

A new form of doctrine, a new interpretation of the form, a new obedience of the form.

On these last two indictments we present proof as follows: Paul, in Cor. 15, gives us a definition of the gospel, viz., the death of Christ for our sins, the burial of Christ, and the resurrection of Christ. The obedience of the gospel is the obedience (in form) of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ. In Rom. 6 he gives us the doctrine, and the obedience of the form of doctrine. "Our old man is crucified with him," we are "buried with him," we are raised with him. A person who believes the gospel, (as defined in Cor. 15,) and obeys the form of it, (as stated in Rom. 6,) is made free from sin. But the re-baptism advocates think this opens the door of the kingdom too wide, and they proceed to say that Paul does not 'declare unto' us the gospel in Cor. 15, (as he says he does,) because he does not declare fit word about the design of baptism in that chapter, and obedience to the three facts stated is not obedience of the gospel! They also say that a man who dies to the love and practice of sin, and is buried in baptism and raised up to walk in newness of life, has not obeyed the form of doctrine, unless he believes at the time that baptism is for remission of sins! Why do they say this? Because some Baptists have died to sin, been buried in baptism, and raised up to walk in newness of life, and it will never do to let the door of the kingdom stand ajar sufficiently to let in a Baptist! And recently they have sprung the wild idea that the sinner does not die to sin until he is buried in the watery grave! All this nonsense has been crammed down the throats of the ignorant readers of the Firm Foundation for a good

spell, to save the rebaptism theory, and for this we Impeach the watery Idol.

These five impeachments we present against the proposition in debate, and we ask Bro. W. to meet us upon them in genuine discussion. Do not quit the battle yet. You have plenty of time, and we have plenty of space, and we promised our readers a thorough investigation of the question. Besides, we have ten indictments against your hobby, and we have thus far presented only five. Let us put in the whole ten, while we have access to the readers of the Firm Foundation, for we never expect to get another opportunity. Brace your spinal column, and come again, Bro. Wilmeth.

## **BRO. WILMETH'S FIFTH SPEECH.**

We have no reply to make to the support which Bro. Burnett claims from "what the brethren at Corinth said about it," only that few who, from prejudice were in favor of his position, both before and after the discussion, have never been able to tell of a scriptural argument made by him in its favor. They are compelled to admit to those who attended it, that most of his time was taken up in burlesque and anecdotes, while C. M. Wilmeth made about all the show of argument that was made on his side.

As to paragraphic thrusts and boasts, both in this issue and those since our third article appeared, the strongest logic of a weak position is to belittle an opponent and boast one's self the victor.

He boldly attacks our second syllogism, saying, "The fallacy lurks in the major premise—a belief of what Jesus says." But does he show the fallacy? Far from it. He assumes that the expression, "what Jesus says," means all that Jesus ever said. The verb was purposely put in the present tense, to bring the thing to be believed before the mind as a present proposition, and not leave it as something unheard of and consequently impossible of belief. The proposition is not that one now believes, or has already believed, all that Jesus ever said; but, having settled in his mind that Jesus is the Son of God and can not lie, he proposes to confidently accept whatever Jesus has said or may say to his understanding. For Jesus says nothing to any one only that which such a one hears, or has the ability to hear. Belief of necessity comes by hearing, but one may refuse to hear. To refuse to hear or disbelieve "what Jesus says" is to reject him and his word. Will Bro. B. or any one professing faith in Christ, allow faith in Jesus admits of a rejection or denial of that which he regards as his word? If he does, he allows that one may believe Christ to be true and yet be a liar at the same time, or that God can lie; if he does not, he admits our premise to be true. This premise being proven, our position is established. Not only so, but the belief of Jesus' sayings about Jonah and the whale, Herod's title to be called a fox, and of



everything else written of him in the New Testament, becomes apart of the faith that fits for baptism, provided only that the knowledge of these sayings come to the understanding before baptism is demanded, Bro. B.'s preaching against such belief to the contrary notwithstanding. Who has the hardihood to say that one who rejects the sayings of Jesus on any subject or that disbelieves what is written of him in the New Testament is a proper subject of baptism? Think reader, and don't allow this "livieliest" of all the polemical foxes on the American continent to deceive you.

Bro. B. has tried to make the impression that we have insisted that "a candidate for baptism is required to believe all that Jesus says in the New Testament before he can be baptized." This is but a caricature growing out of his own perverse way of reading and representing those whom he tries to cripple with his captious criticisms. We have said, and here repeat—without the fear of a reasonable reader and believer contradicting— that the confession that "Jesus is the Christ the Son of the living God," is not only a declaration of the belief of what has already been learned of Jesus, but a solemn pledge to accept all that may yet be learned of him. For no one can believe that he is divine, and yet disbelieve his word. "God can not lie." Does Bro. B. dare gainsay? Still Bro. B. insists that one need not believe his blessed word, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; " or the precept based upon it, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins," before baptism. To divert attention from the condemnatory consequences of his denial of these plain words of Jesus, he assures his readers that we teach one must "believe all that is said on the design of baptism before he can be baptized." Another fiction of his own. But we do insist one must hear the command of the Lord Jesus before he can believe or obey it. No one can be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus (by the authority of the Lord Jesus) without the knowledge that he authorized it. No one can get a correct knowledge of this authority without learning the substance of the commission to the apostles or the commands which they gave under the commission. The command of Peter on Pentecost and at Solomon's Porch as plainly

declares the place and purpose of baptism as human language can explain anything. "For remission of sins," or "that your sins may be blotted out," is a part of the command. To baptize or command baptism for any other purpose than to bring one "into his death" and the purchase thereof, even the new life, "into righteousness," into the enjoyment of "a good conscience toward God," "into the kingdom of God's dear Son"—all expressions for one and the same thing—is not to baptize or command baptism in the name of Jesus, or by his authority, but in some other name or by some other authority.

And to invoke his name on such baptisms is a shocking profanation, and mockery of his holy word. As well might the Alliance of Texas attempt to use the governor's name and the great seal of the state to levy a tax on the people to build a temple to their own honor and use. There is fully as much authority in the laws of Texas for this, as there is in the New Testament for that: none at all.

When we confront him with his proper affirmative, "A denominational immersion, with which the one immersed is satisfied, is valid baptism," he stumbles, he backs, he winces, he wiggles. Instead of manning up to the defence of his practice and that of some of "the fathers," he says, "He ought to know we care nothing for a denominational immersion. If there be such a thing, it is certainly invalid. The immersion that we accept is the baptism of a penitent believer in the name of Jesus Christ. This baptism is not 'sect baptism,' or 'denominational baptism,' or 'Baptist baptism,' but the baptism that came from heaven!" Amen, Bro. B. What a concession! Would that it were a confession meek and manly. But we fear it is made with a "mental reservation" as the Courier would say, and that reservation the recognizing as a "penitent believer" one who was, at the time of his baptism, ignorant of the authority and law of Christ, who had passed the penitent state, and believed that he had saved himself by penitence and prayer; and hence was rather an exultant believer in himself than a penitent believer in Christ. At least Bro. B.'s theory, that one need not know what

baptism is for or believe what Jesus has said about it, in order to be validly baptized, admits of just such cases.

But since that suggestive analogy of "a dog barking at his shadow" came on the scene, Bro. B.'s ghost of a "coroner's inquest" will not down. He says: "When an immersed believer comes forward to enter the fellowship of a congregation, the writer of this never catechizes such person in regard to his baptism." (?) Let us see? Header, were you ever present when Bro. B. or one of his sort had preached a strong sermon on first principles and given an invitation for sinners to come forward and confess the Christ, supplementing the same with a plausible plea for proselytes from the denominations? When about a dozen had given the hand and were seated, you remember how the preacher bent loin and whispered to each one. (This silly piece of public impoliteness was to try to cover up the manifest clash between the absurd practice and the plain gospel which had been preached.) Did you know the question whispered? Bro. B. says it was, "Do you come to make the confession?" The six that had answered "yes" stood up and answered the question, "Do you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?" These had to be baptized. Of the others there are two classes. The answer of one class was, "No, I have been a member of the Baptist church." Then followed the question, "Are you satisfied with your baptism?" That of the other class was: "I have been a member of the Methodist church." Then followed: "Have you been immersed?" This having received the answer "yes," admitted them. Is there one creed here, or three? Is this "catechizing such persons (immersed believers, eh?) in regard to their baptism?" Or is it a "coroner's inquest?" It's Bro. B.'s bantling, it's not our business to furnish names for the mongrel progeny of truth and error. Call on Caskey.

"Where was the church when Alex. Campbell was born?!! Not much in the high places of the denomination. It was mainly in the lower walks of life. But where ever it was, still in the faith, keeping the faith, walking by faith, and not denying "what Jesus says," but receiving it with all readiness of mind. Bro. B. seems to know where the church was all the way up, even through the "Dark

Ages," to the time of the Reformation; but as the light grew brighter from the sixteenth to the nineteenth century, his bat-like vision fails to discover it any more till the birth of Campbell. Now, what the birth of Alex. Campbell has to do with the perpetuity of the church, we still can't see. We are happy to know his earnest life and eminent labors had much to do with rending the veil of superstition and false doctrine—which the denominational clergy had ever been wont to hang between the people and the word of God—so that the people could look to the Lord by faith in his word for salvation, and not to the clergy; and that a specialty of his labors was to recover that sacred piece of furniture of the Lord's house, called baptism, from the Philistine temples of sectarian superstition—where it had been made to serve as a magical symbol, either with or without faith, to blot out sins "actual" or "original," or simply as a door into denominational fellowship, and place it again at the door of "the true tabernacle," upon its proper basis of faith in him whose death and resurrection gave it significance and purpose. For Mr. Campbell says, in relating his interview with the leading Baptist clergy of Ky., at the McCalla debate, 1825, "The only thing to me an interest, and to them a novelty, was the design of baptism," etc. For it must be confessed that the Baptist clergy, owing to their blinding devotion to Calvinism and their horror of "water regeneration" as held by pedobaptists, had gone farther astray than almost any other on this subject. Though they held tenaciously to "the form of godliness," they frequently "denied its power." And this to a considerable extent among the other denominations, the more so as they adopted the "mourning bench" as a means of "reconciling God to man." Neglecting the reconciliation made by the blood of Christ, and the means of availing one's self thereof as made known in the gospel, they sought to bring Christ down again by penitence and pray, to do that for them which he made possible and proper for them to do themselves, by taking heed thereunto according to his word." Yet notwithstanding this defection from "the faith" on the part of many, we are still persuaded there was faith on the earth. Pity for Bro. B.'s seeming ignorance of church history had caused us to collect a number of authorities to quote and show that at no period long or

short, was the church "composed of persons who were not baptized for remission of sins' as you (I) understand it," even if we have to look to the popular denominations for the church. But we shall not waste time or spare to give them, for our pity is spoiled by the reflection that his ignorance is feigned. For certainly there is not a religious editor on the continent so ignorant of ecclesiastic literature as not to know that baptism for remission of sins, not only as we understand it, but in a much stronger sense, is incorporated in nearly all of the creeds from that of the Roman Catholics down to that of the Latter-Day Saints. Move than that, it was in the Bible, and the hearts of those that believed and obeyed the Bible, long before Alexander Campbell was born, up till he was born, and even on after he was born. But this is Bro. B.'s dilemma "with two long horns." He set it for us, but it threatens him. Look at it. Jesus said two things: "He that believeth (what the apostles preached, "Be baptized for remission," etc., being apart of the preaching,) and is baptized shall be saved; he that believeth not shall be damned." Bro. B. argues that if believing what the apostles preached was necessary to being baptized into Christ, into his church, for 200 years before the birth of Campbell, "the church failed during that period." Why? Because Bro. B.'s theory demands, and he assumes, that no one at that time believed the simplest and most fundamental of positive gospel precepts. What's the proof? None, only that Bro. B.'s theory that one need not know and believe the command of the Lord Jesus in order to obey it, demands the absurd assumption. Or possibly he may gather assurance for the supposition from the absence of any errors of persecution at that particular period pointing toward a people denounced as "rebaptists," "heretics," or as having a "watery hobby;" for he knows the like had marked the course of the faithful from Paul even on to the Waldenses. But we must bear in mind that was a period comparatively free from persecution, and there were no "Simon-pure" and sweet-spirited journals then, like the Messenger and Courier, to denounce their brethren for preaching the simple faith of Christ and practicing what they preached. But we must pause. Don't be uneasy, Bro. B., about our letting up too

soon. "We'll fight it out on this line," etc. Please play fair on time and space. This starts on the 12th, when will it get in?

## **BRO. BURNETT'S FIFTH REPLY.**

We told Bro. Wilmeth when the discussion commenced, that it would be somewhat irregular, in consequence of our absence from home. Sometimes his article reaches this office when the writer is two hundred miles from Dallas; then it must lie till he returns. Hence the delay. It is not the difficulty to meet Bro. Wilmeth's arguments that causes the tardiness, but absence from the office. We dispose of his points in short order when we get them in hand. Bro. Wilmeth's speeches are very ponderous, it is true, in physical proportions, but not in mental scope. Like the old North Carolina corn-dodger, they have more heft than flavor. If he would apportion the length of his speech to the depth, it would not consume so much space.

He says the brethren at Corinth can not recall the scriptural arguments Bro. Burnett used in the oral debate. It is likely that Bro. Wilmeth has not called on many of them. It is said to be rather a painful passtime for him to talk about the debate in that vicinity. We had enough scriptural arguments written on the blackboard to defeat his proposition, and we have reproduced enough of them in this discussion to defeat it in the paper. We should like for somebody to recall a scriptural argument Bro. W. used, either in the oral or written debate, that bears upon the proposition. Of course there were some anecdotes in the oral debate, and that is what upset Bro. Wilmeth. The laugh was on the other side of the mouth! He will never forget the mulatto boy that had no father! and the two little orphan preachers at Corinth that could not trace their ecclesiastical pedigree beyond Brush Run! Will some brother please tell us how Bros. Wilmeth and Jones bridged the bloody chasm between A. Campbell and the Waldenses? Will he give us their interpretation of the type of the return of the Israelites from Babylonish captivity—that when they reached Jerusalem they discovered that there was not an Israelite among them, and they had all to return to Babylon and be born again of Abraham! Certainly, it would be impossible to debate with two such men as J. R. Wilmeth and J. R. Jones and not have a little fun. Their manner

of defending the rebaptism hobby would make a graveyard laugh. Especially when they come to the line of succession and the sillinesses! Bro. Wilmeth is in error when he says we have tried to belittle our opponent by paragraph thrusts and boasts. As to belittling his arguments, that would be impossible. They are already so small as to be invisible to the naked eye. We have made no paragraph thrusts or boasts, but simply mentioned the fact that some of his brethren were trying to help him out in the columns of the F. F., and others were trying to pull him off the track.

Bro. W. makes no new points in his last article, but rehashes the same old ones that have already been answered. He is old enough to know that a gunner can not burn his powder twice, and that there is no profit in attempting to explode the same old shells. Let us have something new, Bro. Wilmeth.

The 'syllogism.' "The fallacy lurks in the major premise—'what Jesus says.'" He asserts that we did not show the fallacy. We showed that the phrase "what Jesus-says" means all that Jesus says, or it must have a limit. If it means all that Jesus says in the New Testament, nobody has faith. If it is limited to what he says on the design of baptism, very few of our converts have faith, for they do not understand all that he says on the design. Our most learned scribes differ as to the meaning of some of the designs. Is it possible that none of us has faith? There is a fallacy in the syllogism, or most of the so-called Christian people are outside of the kingdom of Christ. Bro. W. now cuts down the meaning of the phrase to "what Jesus says to a man's understanding." That is getting it nearer the truth. If a man rejects what Jesus says to his understanding, that is unbelief. But a man may accept all he understands Jesus to say, and be a believer therefore, and yet not understand that Jesus says baptism is for remission of sins. But here Bro. W. shoots off on a wild tangent: "Will Bro. B. allow that faith in Jesus admits of a rejection or denial of that which he regards as his word?" There is no such issue involved in this discussion. A Baptist does not reject or deny that which he regards as the word of Jesus. There is a difference in a failure to understand some statements of the New Testament, and a rejection



or denial of what a man believes Jesus says. If a failure to understand a text is rejection of the text, then all of us are infidels. We have already shown that Bro. Wilmeth and Bro. Jones do not understand all the texts alike, even the texts on the design of baptism. One of them is therefore without faith, and without valid baptism! Bro. W. says that the statement that the whale swallowed Jonah, or that Herod is a fox, is a part of the faith that qualifies for baptism, provided the candidate hears it before he is baptized. But suppose he hears it and does not understand it, but goes on and is baptized, (believing with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,) is his baptism invalid? If so, you should put it into the confession, and you should put it into your catechism also. The next time you go to rebaptize a Baptist, you should not only ask him if he understood all the designs of baptism, but if he also understood that Herod was a fox? But here he goes again: "Who has the hardihood to say that one who rejects the sayings of Jesus on any subject is a proper subject of baptism?" If Bro. Wilmeth will cool of sufficiently to get a square look at the subject under discussion, we will whisper in his ear that there is no sense in such questions as that. There is a vast difference between misunderstanding the sayings of Jesus, and rejecting the sayings of Jesus. Can you not see that, Bro. Wilmeth? You and Bro. Jones do not understand all the texts on the design of baptism, do you therefore reject the texts?

You see where your silly-gism has led you, and the best thing you can do is to throw it overboard and waste no more time upon it.

He next says that the confession that Jesus is the Son of God is a declaration of belief of what has already been learned of Jesus, and a pledge of all that may be learned. Yes, but what if the confessor has not learned some things in the New Testament, and has misunderstood some other things, is he still an unbeliever? And here he goes again: "Still Bro. B. insists that one need not believe his blessed word, 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.'" Bro. B. does not so insist, and if Bro. Wilmeth, can not see that he misrepresents his opponent he has less intellect than we

give him credit for. His next point is, that no one can be baptized in the name of the Lord, Jesus without the knowledge that he authorizes it, and no one can get a correct knowledge of this authority without learning the substance of the commission to the apostles or the commands which they gave under it." If "in the name" means by the authority, and Baptists are led to baptism by the authority of Christ, are they not baptized in the name of Christ? Ask the next Baptist that you attempt to rebaptize if he was not led to his first baptism "by the authority of Christ," and see what he will say. We think it likely that Bro. Wilmeth has seen Methodists go to the water and be baptized when neither the church nor the preacher demanded it. By whose authority was the baptism received? If a person must have a correct knowledge of the commission and the commands under it, why did not Philip require that at the hands of the eunuch when he asked, "What doth hinder me to be baptized?" Why did not Philip say: "If thou hast a correct knowledge of the authority of Christ, and the substance of the commission and the commands under it, thou mayest." Bro. Wilmeth's doctrine does not harmonize with any example of conversion in the New Testament, and that is why he can not prove it by the Bible. The hobby horse is hipshotten in every limb, and must needs go at a hobbling pace.

Bro. W. says amen to our statement that the baptism we accept is the baptism of a "penitent believer in the name of Jesus Christ," and not a "denominational baptism," but he retreats from it at once, and says that our position makes room for a person who has passed the penitent state, and believes he has already saved himself by penitence and prayer. There are no such persons.

Bro. Wilmeth should not misrepresent his religious neighbors. What is a penitent, Bro. W. ? Is it a person who has repented, or one who is trying to repent? Do you baptize penitent believers? If repentance precedes baptism, have not your converts passed the penitent state when they come to your baptism? If you are not careful, you will trip up your own legs along here.

Bro. W. is sick of that "coroner's inquest" and "catechism," and he sees no escape from it, and therefore he undertakes to prove that the kettle is as black as the pot. Misery loves company. He is so eager to have us as deep in the mire as he is in the mud, that he does not wait to learn whether we have a catechism, but fires away and manufactures one out of his own imagination. The rebaptists of Texas have been so anxious to get Bro. Burnett on their Baptist platform, that one of the little hobby scribes, concocted a dialogue between him and a Baptist lady that came forward in a meeting, and put the catechism in quotation marks, when not a word of it was ever spoken! Bro. Burnett has no catechism. He never asks a Baptist, "Are you satisfied with your baptism?" nor a Methodist, "Have you been immersed?" So, Bro. Wilmeth, your grand and lofty effort is a failure, a flash in the pan, a simple waste of powder. It is a pure fabrication. It is not our bantling or progeny, and there is no need of calling Caskey. But it is known and read of all men that the rebaptists of Texas and Arkansas have a catechism and coroner's inquest, and they put it in practice when they sit on the body of an applicant for church fellowship. If it could be shown that Bro. Burnett has a catechism also, that would not prove the thing scriptural or right, and such logic is simply saying, "You are another." The practice should be defended or abandoned. If it is abandoned, the rebaptist hobby will be abandoned also, and the strife and schism in the churches will cease.

By much effort and persuasion, we have at last brought Bro. Wilmeth to the question, "Where was the church when Alex. Campbell was born?" But he gives very little satisfaction when he gets there. Does he tell us where the church was? Not much! Listen: "Not much in the high places of the denominations." Well, then, it must have been in the low places of Satan's kingdom! There were only two places. "But wherever it was, it was still in the faith, keeping the faith, walking by faith, and not denying what Jesus says." It "the faith" was a belief that baptism is for the remission of sins, we should be glad for you to give us the name of a few persons who had this faith when they were baptized, at the time Alex. Campbell was born. We do not care whether you find

them in the high places of the denominations, or in the low places of the devil's kingdom, just so you find where the church was, find who composed it. Was Alex. Campbell in it? He did not understand that baptism is for remission of sins till some years after he was baptized. Was Eld. Luce in it? He was a Baptist when he immersed Alex. Campbell. Could he stand in the devil's kingdom and baptize Alex. Campbell into Christ's kingdom? Bro. Wilmeth is so tearful that he will find the church among the baptized believers of A. Campbell's day, who did not know that baptism is for remission of sins, that he jumps clean over the hind and tries to locate It among the Catholics and Mormons! The Mormons did not exist till a good while after Campbell was born, and it was a convert of A. Campbell (Sidney Rigdon) that put the baptism plank into the Mormon creed. The Catholics held that baptism was for remission of sins, but they applied baptism to unconscious babes and not to believers in Christ. Bro. W. will doubtless admit that believers baptized by Baptists were more likely to be in the kingdom than unconscious infants sprinkled by priests "for remission of sins." It is altogether gratuitous for Bro. W. to say that the old saints of the sixteenth century were called anabaptists for the same reason the rebaptists of this age are called anabaptists. He ought to know better. They baptized persons who had been sprinkled, and for that reason were called anabaptists by the Catholics. The persons they baptized had been sprinkled "for remission of sins," but had not been baptized at all. They did not baptize persons who had been dipped without a knowledge of the design of baptism. But if the old anabaptists constituted the church of Christ, we wish to see you connect Alex. Campbell with that line. Or, if you locate the church in the bosom of Rome, just come out and tell us so in your next. It will make us happy to have you put your foot down somewhere, and make a stand.

Bro. Wilmeth did not notice our last two indictments of the rebaptism hobby, viz., the new gospel and the new obedience of the gospel, and the new form of doctrine. We now add our sixth indictment, viz., a new theory of the new birth. Christian people have held that to believe and be baptized is to be born of water and

the Spirit. John says, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is begotten of God." Baptism is the birth, and when a person believes that Jesus is the Christ and is baptized, he is born again, and is a child of God. But the rebaptists contradict John, and say that a person who believes that Jesus is the Christ is not begotten of God, for a belief that baptism is for remission of sins is necessary to the new birth! Why do they say this? Many Baptists believe that Jesus is the Christ, and are begotten of God, and they are also born of water, and thus enter the family of God. The rebaptists would rather contradict the Scriptures and despoil the beautiful figure of the new birth, than let a Baptist into the kingdom of God. And for this high crime against Bible truth we impeach and indict the rebaptism heresy. We boldly challenge our opponent to meet us on these indictments, and show whether they can be sustained.

Bro. W. promises to "fight it out on this line." That is good. We feared that his spinal column was about to collapse, or that his brethren would pull him off the track, and so braced him up with a little taffy.

## **BRO. WILMETH'S SIXTH SPEECH.**

As to whether we have misrepresented Bro. Burnett or others in saying that he insists that certain portions of God's word need not be believed, that certain denominational teachings and practices show some of them believe they have saved themselves from past sins by penitence and prayer, and that he and his sort make use of what (if used by others) he would call a "creed, catechism, or coroner's inquest," we leave the intelligent reader to judge, and proceed to other matters which we deem more profitable to consider than Bro. B.'s bare assertions and bold denials. For if he can convince the reader by simply saying "I have shown" thus and so, when the showing did not appear on paper, or set aside well known examples by merely saying, "Burnett never asks a Baptist, 'Are you satisfied with your baptism?' nor a Methodist, 'Have you been immersed?'" it would be unavailing for us to array facts or appeal to reason. Their practice, inculcated by such utterances as, "Just lay aside your human name and take your stand with us on the Bible, and we'll receive you on your previous immersion if you are satisfied with it," and their denunciations of us, for refusing to indorse immersions based upon such discarded 'human creeds' and authorized by such discarded 'human names,' is Hie cause of this controversy. For we humbly judge that if the foundation be discarded, the building should be also. If the teaching that produced the baptism was wrong, then must the baptism be wrong also. For the Savior says, "An evil tree can not bring forth good fruit;" also: "Either make the tree good, and its fruit good; or else make the tree corrupt and its fruit corrupt; for the tree is known by the fruit it bears." Hence we see, if a denominational doctrine produces good baptisms, the denomination is a good tree.

But herein is our heresy: we insist, in accord with the commission, that men must first be taught and then baptized; must learn the command given in the name of the Lord Jesus before they can obey it; and if immersed into some other way previous to learning the way of the Lord, when they do learn it they should, like the twelve at Ephesus, be baptized in the name of the Lord

Jesus. And by thus preaching according to Scripture precepts and practicing according to Scripture examples, inviting only the unsaved to enter "the ark of safety," we steer clear of occasion for unseemly public whisperings, or for any test but the one question, "Do you believe with all your heart that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God?" Not even Bro. Burnett's "shorter catechism," by which he proposes to let the gate stand ajar sufficiently to let in a Baptist," or his longer catechism, to admit a Methodist or other Pedobaptist, is at all admissible with us; for we know no door but "the open door which no man can shut." As the Savior set it open, and no man can shut it, neither can Bro. B. or any other pretentious mortal "set it ajar," open it or widen it. We thank the Lord for having given us "the door of faith," that is just as wide as the glad reception of his truth, always fully open and such that no pope or pretender can shut. Access thereto may be hindered to some extent by shutting out the light of the truth, but closed it can not be against those who obtain the precious faith of Christ. What then have we to do with Bro. B.'s fictitious church succession, showing a pedigree through Campbell and Brush Run association, or any other carnal genealogy? We are forbidden to "give heed to fables and endless genealogies," such as engage the attention of T. R. Burnett and the Baptists, "which minister questions, rather than the godly edification which is in faith;" and we propose to avoid his "foolish questions and genealogies" as being unscriptural, unprofitable and vain. But we do commend to him and his sort "the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus," or the gospel, as the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes it, Jew or Gentile, common sinner or superstitious sectary; and we do assure them by the commission of our Lord, by the command of the apostles as the Spirit gave them utterance, and by the inspired examples given in the New Testament, that whosoever hears, understands and believes on the Christ through their word, is empowered to become a child of God by "the obedience of faith," no matter whether his baptism take place at the upper end (as Smith's, Roger Williams' and Raines') or at the lower end (as ordinary baptism) of a ritualistic line, or whether in the absence of a faithful fellow-helper, he enter the door by se-baptism. For John says, "To as

many as did receive him, gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believed on his name." Can any one give a reason. why one can not obey the command "Be baptized," by dipping himself, as Naaman did to obey a like command, of the prophet, when he dipped himself seven times in the Jordan? Just as a child of nature can be born into this world without the extraneous aid of the obstetrician, so can the one "begotten with the word of truth" effect his own adoption into the family of God without the extraneous aid of an administrator of baptism. Still, the employment of a suitable second person as administrator, though not indispensable, as a matter of convenience and expediency under ordinary circumstances, like that of the obstetrician, meets the demands of common sense, and finds also sufficient sanction in holy writ. But no where does holy writ signify what character of person is to do "the work of baptism, unless it be in the mere mention of the well suited raiment which John wore. The command to the apostles, "Go teach all nations, baptizing," etc., no more says that they were to do the baptizing by their own hands than the statement that "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John," says Jesus baptized with his own hands, which the record denies. Neither is the promise of salvation conditioned, upon one being baptized by any particular administrator, but the promise is "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," leaving the administrator as an incidental and consequently unimportant factor. But Paul minimizes this importance when he says, "Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel"—the fact that he baptized a few showing only that baptism must not be neglected.

But more especially does the figure of the administrator's importance dwindle into utter obscurity in Paul's treatment of the case of previous immersion, as recorded in 19th of Acts. This case came up for divine adjudication, to determine what is, and what is not, valid baptism, and was evidently put on record for our guidance. The administrator is entirely ignored in the investigation. No inquiry even as to who did the teaching. The sole point raised is, the faith and purpose of their hearts as expressed in the act of



baptism. The inquiry, "Unto (eis) what then were ye baptized?" may, with as good reason be rendered, "Into what were ye baptized?" or, "For what were ye baptized?" As much as to say, "what end did you have in view? or into what state or condition did you seek to enter?" "If they had been baptized into "the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ," it would have been sufficient. But they had not heard and learned sufficiently of the way of the Lord to appreciate "the redemption that is in Christ Jesus through faith in his blood." Hence when Paul showed to them the insufficiency of their previous information and imparted to them the necessary knowledge of the Lord, thereby laying the sure foundation of the faith, the building of an intelligent baptism, obedience to the faith, was built upon, "they were baptized in (eis, into) the name of the Lord Jesus." It was not enough that they even sought remission by a way once authorized but now superseded, it was necessary that they should seek according to the law now in force, in the name of Jesus Christ. What claim can there be now for the validity for those baptisms to which men come not seeking remission or acceptance with God by any requirement of his, present or past? If the failure then to grasp the gist and meaning of the gospel, ere the glad tidings had fully made known in those parts, could not be excused on the ground of "unavoidable mistake and innocency of intention," so that their baptism was treated as a nullity by the apostle, upon what ground now, since the gospel has been fully made known, can any one plead the validity of baptisms received in ignorance, unbelief, or denial, of the plainest and most fundamental precepts of the gospel? Was failure to hear ere the opportunity came a more damaging mistake than failing to heed when hearing is the privilege of every one?

What we object to is the baptism of unbelief, that ignores, or denies the gospel offer, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." Burnett's theory of "baptism 'for remission of sins,' in the sense that God is the remitter," it is God's design to remit in baptism whether the sinner responds by faith to the purpose and proposal of the Lord or

not, is the most objectionable of all. This would have the Lord to pardon some in baptism that do not believe they are sinners, do not desire pardon, do not design to be pardoned, and do not believe the Lord pardons according to his word. This would be a baptism without faith in the Lord, and "whatsoever is not of faith is sin." Nor is it, in the light of the test case, sufficient to justify an immersion received in ignorance and unbelief of the authority and command of the Lord, to say, It was submitted to "to honor God," "to please God," "In honesty of purpose to do his will," or because it was understood to be the command of the Lord; for all this may in truth be said of those previously immersed at Ephesus, yet when they heard and learned of Paul, they were immersed again. So Paul must have been the first rebaptist, as well as the first called a heretic. What then if we be called heretics, rebaptists, Novatians, or Publicans, for preaching Christ and following Paul?

Are we asked, "What about those who, despite the prejudicial teachings of the denominations, learn the truth, discard the creed, ignore the usage, and make the passage of the open door by the hands of the denominational administrator?" We answer: Those who "have the faith of Christ" and "walk by the same rule" are our brethren in the Lord. We greet them on the ground of the common faith. They do not need to "join us" any more than we need to join them. We are already united in Christ our head. Our mutual personal association, called "fellowship," depends on becoming a disciple and proximity of abode.

## **BRO. BURNETT'S SIXTH REPLY.**

Bro. Wilmeth "leaves it to the intelligent reader," whether he misrepresents us in charging that we say "certain portions of God's word need not be believed." Well, an intelligent reader knows there is a vast difference in saying a text "need not be believed," and in saying a person may be saved though he honestly misunderstands some texts. That there is a vast difference between unbelief of God's word and a mistake as to the point in obedience at which remission of sins is received. It does not seem like it would require a very intelligent reader to understand that difference, but we have yet to find the first rebaptist advocate that understands it. Bro. W. is also "satisfied to let the reader judge" whether we catechize persons who come forward, (in the face of our positive protest that we do no such thing,) because some of our brethren do that way. If the brethren act as ugly as the rebaptists do, we have no defence to make for them. They must quit the practice or defend it."What we charge is, that every rebaptist preacher in the country has a catechism and a coroner's inquest, and his doctrine requires him to use it, and it is unscriptural and sinful. Bro. Wilmeth must defend it, or abandon it. It will not do to say that others are as deep in the mud as he is in the mire. That is no argument.

He says this controversy grew out of the fact that they refused to "indorse immersions based upon discarded human names and human creeds." We beg pardon, but the controversy did not grow out of that at all. The immersions they refuse to indorse are not based upon human names and human creeds, but upon faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and obedience to his commandment. The unscriptural act of sitting upon these immersions with a coroner's inquest, and disturbing the peace and harmony of the churches with a human hobby, is what occasioned this controversy. Bro. W. has not been able to find a text requiring a belief that baptism is for remission of sins as a condition of baptism, nor a text authorizing him to apply his coroner's inquest to persons who have been baptized, and this is the foundation of his building which has been overturned.

He says that "if the teaching that produced the baptism was wrong, the baptism was wrong also." But the teaching that "produced the baptism" was not wrong. Wrong teaching can not produce right action. If there were some errors taught along with the truth that "produced the baptism," and those errors invalidated the baptism, then there is no valid baptism on earth! Does Bro. Wilmeth teach no error? Were there no errors taught when he obeyed the gospel? Is his baptism therefore invalid? Does it require perfect teaching to produce valid baptism? Your theory gets shorter and shorter, Bro. Wilmeth! Not only faith in the design of baptism, but perfect teaching and perfect knowledge! "Where are you at" anyhow? But he says a bad tree can not bring good fruit. That is true, but when you see good fruit on a tree, you know the tree is not entirely bad. Can not a tree have some faulty limbs and yet bear good fruit? You do not measure the tree by the faulty limbs, but by the fruit it produces. If a preacher preaches the gospel of Christ, and it produces obedience, we do not call that a bad tree or bad fruit. By the same logic that Bro. Wilmeth rejects a baptism administered by a Baptist, he should reject the faith and repentance produced by the same Baptist, and the good morals inculcated into his converts! Have you taught any of your deluded followers, Bro. W., to re-faith and re-repent? If not, why not? Can a bad tree bring good fruit? Can Baptist preaching produce good faith and good repentance? If not, you must go to re-faithing and re-repenting! A rebaptist once asked the writer if the Baptist gospel would convert a sinner? We replied, "No, the Baptist gospel (if there be such a thing) will not convert a sinner, but a Baptist preacher may preach enough of the gospel of Christ to convert a sinner. Bro. W. says, "It denominational doctrine produces good baptism, the denomination is a good tree." But the "denominational doctrine" did not produce the baptism, and the baptism was not performed in the name of the "denominational doctrine." The baptism was produced by the preaching of the gospel, and it was administered in the name of Christ.

Bro. W. says: "But herein is our heresy: we insist that men must first be taught and then baptized, or if immersed into some other

way previous to learning the way of the Lord, when they do learn it they should like the twelve at Ephesus be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus." Beg pardon, Bro. W., but that is not your heresy. Your heresy does not consist in teaching that men must be taught and baptized, (for we all teach that,) nor that persons of like character with the twelve at Ephesus should be rebaptized. But you are condemned and impeached and your hobby is denounced because you insist that persons who have been taught, and have faith in Christ as the Son of God, and have been baptized in his name, shall be rebaptized because they did not understand one of the designs of baptism. And you insist on setting up your coroner's inquest at the door of the church fellowship and passing a verdict upon each member of the body, after passing him through the crucible of your catechism as to his knowledge and faith in the one point of doctrine! The twelve at Ephesus were sound on the doctrine of baptism for remission, for John's baptism was for remission of sins, and they were therefore unlike the persons you rebaptize. They had not been baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus," and the persons you re-baptize have been baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus." Here is another difference. The twelve at Ephesus had "not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." The persons you rebaptize have heard whether there be any Holy Ghost, and have been baptized in his name. Here is another difference. You have never rebaptized a person who had not been baptized "in the name of the Lord Jesus," and had not heard "whether there be any Holy Ghost," and therefore have never re-baptized a person of like character with the twelve at Ephesus. Why then do you refer to this case, and call Paul the first rebaptist and heretic, when you know it is not within a thousand leagues of the cases that come in your practice?

And here is the wildest break of all: "By thus preaching according to the Scripture precepts, and practicing according to Scripture examples, we steer clear of occasion for unseemly public whisperings or for any test but the question, 'Do you believe with all your heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?'" All, Bro. Wilmeth, it is for the very fact you do not preach and practice and

follow scriptural examples, and ask the one question, that we condemn you. You know that rebaptism preachers all over Texas and Arkansas do ask other questions, and you admitted in the Corinth debate that you asked Baptists other questions when they came up under your preaching! Don't deny it now. And you know that forty churches in Texas and Arkansas have been wrecked upon this rock of catechizing Baptists. If there had been no catechism, there would have been no wreck. From the first we have condemned this feature of your practice, for no preacher has the scriptural right to stand at the door of church fellowship and pass upon the qualifications of members. Do not deny your progeny now, and do not steal our thunder! The '-shorter catechism" and the longer "coroner's inquest" are both offspring of the hobby, begotten by Win. McIntire and born of A. McGary, and nursed by a hundred wet nurses in Texas and Arkansas! We do not wonder you are ashamed of your "poor kin," but we will make you blush worse than that before this contest is ended! "No, sir, we do not "get the door ajar" to receive Baptists, and we are determined that you shall not shut the door, nor slam it in the face of any child of God, nor bar it up with your rebaptism hobby. Christ opened it, and the inscription upon the door reads: "If thou believest with all thine heart thou mayest." When we find a person who has believed with all his heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, and has entered the door into the building, we recognize him as a child of the family, and we deny the right of any preacher to raise a racket or create division because said child of God did not know the exact location of all the steps at the door. Nor will we permit Bro. Wilmeth to change the inscription upon the door of God's house, and write thereon his hobby creed, "If thou believest with all thine heart that baptism is for the remission of sins, thou mayest."

Bro. Wilmeth asks: 'What have we to do with Bro. B.'s fictitious church succession, showing a pedigree through Campbell and Brush Run, or any other carnal genealogy?" We have observed that he has very little to do with it! He seems to be about as much afraid of it as a negro is of a ghost and a graveyard. At one time he plunged into the genealogical business pretty freely, and gathered

up some histories, and came very near tracing his line of succession back to the Mormons and Romanists; but when we showed him that the Mormons originated since Campbell's day, and the Romanists baptize infants (not believers) for the remission of sins, he concluded not to locate the church among them! and now he gives us a dissertation on the sinfulness of "endless genealogies, which minister questions rather than godly edification." Well, we suppose there is not much "godly edification" in his genealogy, for it only reaches to Brush Run, and there it runs into the ground or into the Baptists, and the line or hobby is at an end! In his desperation he seems inclined to adopt the self-birth theory, or the re-baptism theory!—that a man can born himself, or baptize himself, and start a line of succession without any ancestors! He is so fearful that we will find among his forefathers a man who did not understand that baptism was for remission of sins, that he would fain become the progeny of a Mormon, or Romanist, or become his own daddy! He leaps from the frying-pan into the ashes, and from the ashes into the fire, and his friends are beginning to ask, "Where are we at anyhow?" Bro. Wilmeth, you must admit the church failed and the Bible is false, or that if existed, among immersed believers of A. Campbell's day and the rebaptism doctrine is false, or that a few unbaptized sinners in the devil's kingdom by 'spontaneous generation' borned themselves will and started a church! Which horn of the trilemma you take?

Bro. W. says: "No where does holy writ signify what character of persons is to do the work of baptizing." This is another mistake. Christ commanded his disciples to baptize, and they did it. Philip baptized the Samaritans and eunuch, and he was a baptized believer; likewise Ananias, who baptized Saul. No sinner was authorized to baptize, and there was no self-baptism. And our opponent makes another wild break, when he says that Paul asked the twelve at Ephesus, "Into what state or condition did you seek to enter by your baptism?" Paul asked no such question, but, "Unto what were ye baptized?" That is, unto what baptism, or what system, and by whose authority. He never catechized them about

their understanding of the design of baptism, and in that he differed from the rebaptists of the nineteenth century. It would also be more in the line of genuine debate, if Bro. Wilmeth would quit speaking of "baptisms received in ignorance and unbelief," as if these terms were applicable to the kind of baptisms we are discussing. He knows better, and only throws in these ugly terms to till up the empty minds of ignorant readers and make believe that he is debating the question. For instance: "What we object to is the baptism of unbelief, that ignores or denies the gospel offer." He knows there is no such baptism in question in this discussion. And this, (spoken of a person who is baptized without a knowledge of God's design in baptism,) "This would be a baptism without faith in the Lord, and 'whatever is not of faith is sin.'" He persists in the error that lack of faith in the design of baptism is lack of faith in the Lord, when he knows that the person has faith in the Lord, and that this faith impels him to baptism. Bro. Wilmeth ought to quit repeating that they are called heretics and rebaptists because they preach Christ and follow the apostles. It is because they do not follow the apostles that we call them heretics.

They put in a condition to baptism and church fellowship not required by the apostles, and thereby cause schisms and heresies, and for this evil work they are called heretics and schismatics.

Again we complain at Bro. Wilmeth for not answering our arguments. He has not noticed our argument on the new birth. If he can not meet these points, he should say so, and let us enroll them with our other established and unanswerable impeachments.

[At this point the *Firm Foundation* stopped the discussion, by refusing to print any more of it in that paper. ]