



CHAP. I.

Christ was Baptized in the River of Jordan.

CONCERNING the Baptism of *Jesus Christ* you may read it at large, in *Matt.* 3. 13 to 17. "*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John to be baptized of him.*" Every word hath Emphasis. (*Then*)—before he entered upon his public Ministry, as you see in *Matt.* 4. 17. "*From that time Jesus began to Preach.*" (*Cometh*)—he might have commanded John to have attended him; but in token of his subjection he cometh. (*From Galilee*)—many Miles, and 'tis likely on foot; every step we take for God is acceptable, and one day shall have a Glorious Reward. (*To Jordan*)—where there was a River, where Thousands had been Baptized, for it was a suitable place for John to dip Christ in, as will be seen hereafter.

Now I shall take notice of eight things concerning the Baptism of Christ.

First, Concerning his Age, 'tis said, *Jesus being Baptized, Luke 3. 21, began to be about thirty years of Age, ver. 23*; here you see that Christ himself was baptized at Grown Years. If any might be baptized in Infancy, why not Christ? Christians, be not ashamed, your Captain is gone before you, he was Thirty years old when Baptized. Christ is not ashamed to call you Brethren, *Heb. 2. 11.*

Secondly, Another thing to be observed in the Baptism of Christ, is the Administrator of this holy Ordinance, *John*, who confesseth of himself that he was not worthy to unloose the latches of his shoes, *Mark, 1. 7.* Now if Christ would receive Baptism from such an unworthy Instrument never think slightingly of the Ordinance, because of the unworthiness of the administrators, let your eye be on Christ your Example.

Thirdly, Note the Repulse, *John forbade him, Matt. 3. 14.* Difficulty in duty must be no excuse; we must take no denial in following God. *Strive to enter in at the strait gate, Matt. 7. 13.*

Fourthly, Note, John's Argument, *Matt. 3. 14. I have need to be baptized of thee, and*

comest thou to me? Some will not be baptized except it be proven that they have need of it. Their carnal Argument is, May I not go to Heaven though I be not baptized? Is it of Necessity to Salvation? Now this is selfish and unholy. Is this like your Lord and Master? Was not he a perfect Saviour? Was not the Spirit poured on him without measure? He had no sins to be washed away, and yet he was baptized; wherefore see your Example, he doth it not of need but of Obedience to his Father's will.

Fifthly, Note the excellent Terms which our Lord Jesus gives to this Ordinance of Baptism. 1. He calls it *Righteousness*, *Matt.* 3. 15. 'Tis righteous and just that I should be about my Father's business. 2. He declares it to be a comely thing, *it becomes us*: Oh it is a very comely thing in God's Children, to have respect to all the Commandments of God. 3. He mentions a Conjunction between himself and his people. This is implied in the word *us*—(*Thus it becometh us*). He means "thee and me, and all my Followers." *John* 12. 26. *If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be.* 4. He speaks of it as a Completion, it is a *fulfilling*. We are to aim at

this; 2. Cor. 10. 5, 6, "*bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; ver. 6, having a readiness to revenge all disobedience, when your obedience shall be fulfilled.*" Obedience must be fulfilled. 5. He uses the universal term (*all righteousness*). Baptism is one part of the *all*. Christ reckons it so, Thou canst not walk in all the Commands, nor fulfil all righteousness, if this be omitted.

Sixthly, Note, Concerning Christ's Baptism the form of Administration, *Matt. 3. 16. And he went up straightway out of the water.* (*Straightway*)—because Baptism is *once* Dipping. (*Up*)—had he not been down, it would not have been said that he went up. (*He went*)—and therefore he was not carried in arms as infants are. (*Out*)—if he went out of the water then he must have been in it: we never say one goes out of the house when he never was in, so Christ could not be said to come out of the water, had he not been in. (*He went up out*)—had a little water been brought to him in a bason, he had not been said to go up out of it. (*Of the water*)—this water was the River of Jordan: Christ stoops to notice small things because they were mixed up with a divine Ordinance.

Seventhly, Note, Concerning Christ's

Baptism, the Father's Acceptance, *Matt. 3. 16, 17.* (*The heavens were opened:*)—some of Christ's Followers have found glorious openings of Heaven in Baptism. (*The Spirit descended*)—the very same that is promised to Believers in their Baptism, *Acts 2. 38. Repent, and be Baptized every one of you, and ye shall receive the Holy Ghost.* [Objection. *But doth every one receive the Holy Ghost that is baptized?* Answer. If not, the defect lies not in Baptism, but in the want of Faith and Repentance; without which no Ordinance is effectual.] (*And lo, a voice from Heaven, This is My beloved Son*)—Christ, as Head of his Church, was sealed for the whole body; and in Baptism the Sonship of his Members is held forth. (*In him I am well pleased*)—not only in all he hath done and doth do, but in this very Act of Baptism, as an Act of Obedience to my glorious Will, I am well pleased, and so is the Lord well pleased with the same Act of Obedience in all believers, wherein *from the heart we obey the form of Doctrine delivered to us*, *Rom. 6. 17.* This same Voice bore witness to the blessed Son of God in the Mount, saying, *This is my beloved Son: hear him*, *Luke, 9. 35.* Hear him in his Commands and Appointments. Hear him

now in his Baptism. Oh, saith Christ, thus it becometh *us*; you that have my Father for your Father, you that have my God for your God: Thus it becometh *us* to be baptized and to fulfil all righteousness. *He is God's beloved Son, hear him.*

Eighthly, Note, How in Christ's Baptism the Trinity doth as it were meet; the Father speaks with a voice, the Son is baptized in Person, the Holy Ghost descends like a Dove: and surely it is one Reason, why Baptism in special is to be administered in the Name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, because he who doth sincerely believe, and is baptized, hath the whole Trinity, the Father, Son, and Spirit, for his portion. The glorious Union of the Trinity, in Christ's Baptism, is in every Believer's Baptism commemorated, and therefore it deserveth to be reverently thought upon. He that despiseth an Ordinance in which that sacred Name is named should beware lest he be found guilty of taking the Name of the Lord in vain.

