

picturing death and resurrection. It could also be portrayed by Affusion, as picturing the Holy Spirit, the Agent of regeneration.

It would seem that cleansing from guilt could be portrayed by any mode, but that Aspersions would portray the symbolism of the sprinkling of the blood of Christ most graphically, whereas Immersion would portray a complete washing.

It would seem that initiation into the Church could be portrayed by any mode, but that Affusion would best portray the symbolism of the Holy Spirit, who baptizes into the body of Christ.

But as to the basic and central import of Ritual Baptism, that of Union with Christ, it would seem that the symbolism of the Holy Spirit, who is spoken of as "coming upon," "falling upon," "being given," and "being poured out upon," would be best portrayed by the mode of Affusion.

### **Conclusion**

Baptism is a Sacrament, wherein the washing with water, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, doth signify and seal our engrafting into Christ, and partaking of the benefits of the covenant of grace, and our engagement to be the Lord's.

*The Shorter Catechism, Q. 94*

This is part of the Constitution of the Bible Presbyterian Church. It has been consistently interpreted in the same manner in which the Westminster Divines interpreted their Standards; i.e., as including Immersion as a proper Mode while expressing a preference for Affusion and Aspersions.

In examining the evidence relevant to an understanding of the Scriptural Mode of Ritual Baptism, we have noted that the relevant words have undergone a development from denoting a mode of action to denoting the administration of a sacramental ceremony, with no Mode involved or implied. We have noted that ceremonial cleansings have employed various modes of application of the purifying element, but that in the early Church pouring seems to have been predominant, sprinkling was used under certain conditions, and immersion came into usage much later than is ordinarily supposed. We have noted that the central import of Ritual