

this consideration does not of itself indicate a particular mode of baptism.

(2) Mode and convenience of facilities

In our modern era, when every church can own its own facilities for baptism, this consideration seems hardly worth mentioning, unless one is ministering in a remote area where facilities are not readily available. This may be graphically illustrated by a quotation from a news letter sent to me by a Baptist missionary working in Hokkaido, Japan:

"On March 8th, some of these people who have turned to Christ from idols to serve the living and true God, brought their idols and burned them publicly, despite a drenching downpour. Godshelves, idols, incense coffers, and incense- -- versus tons of water from the sky. One of the new babes in Christ struck a match, and victory was declared on the side of the fire!

Then eight of the new believers went a step further to declare themselves Christian. These eight (4 men, 4 women) followed the Lord in baptism in the afternoon. (The indoor Japanese bath used for this purpose was so small that it was impossible to submerge each candidate completely, necessitating a novel manipulation: One poor lad was made to double up as a ball, fall into the tub face downward, and still half of his torso was protruding above the water. Pressure had to be applied in order to try and flatten him out, but this still didn't get him all under. And for lack of time -- he was extremely patient, holding his breath down there -- the method resorted to was affusion!)"

(3) Mode and climate

In the frozen regions of the world the question of mode becomes very insistent. In some cases it would not only be impracticable, but perhaps dangerous to practice immersion. However, this objection is not insuperable, especially if baptism is postponed until a milder season of the year, or if the candidate for baptism can travel to an indoor facility.

(4) Mode and clinical baptism

In the early church, sprinkling and pouring were employed in cases of infirm persons too weak to be submitted to baptism in a font in a church. In cases of persons today who are invalid or very ill, it would appear that immersion is almost ruled out. The question in such cases is whether one who holds categorically to immersion as the only valid mode can use an alternate mode when emergency conditions prevail.

d. Theological Considerations as to Mode

(1) Ritual baptism and Spirit baptism

It would appear that there is an important relationship between the external rite of baptism and the Holy Spirit's act of baptizing believers