

ritual or ceremonial sense," probably employing the mode of pouring or sprinkling.

The word *bapto*, which is used in the classical Greek and in the Septuagint to mean "to dip," is used twice to mean "to dip," and once to mean "to dye." It is never used of Christian Baptism.

The word *baptisma*, found only in Christian writers, adds no information to our quest for the Biblical Mode. The same statement can be made concerning the word *baptistes* (baptizer) applied to John.

The word *baptismos*, which occurs four times in the New Testament, is used of the ritual washing of cups and pots (Mark 7:4, 8), of Christian Baptism (Heb 6:2), and of the various ceremonial cleansings of the Old Testament (Heb 9:10). In regard to this last usage, it is important to note that (1) No ceremonial cleansings by immersion are prescribed in the Old Testament; (2) The immediate context of Heb 9:10 (specifically verses 11-23) describes some of these cleansings -- of the book, of the people, of the tabernacle, and of the vessels of the tabernacle which were accomplished by *sprinkling*. This, however, does not mean that the "divers washings" of Heb 9:10 *means* "divers *sprinklings*." It means various cleansings, the greater majority of which in the Old Testament were accomplished by sprinkling, though some of them were not. Coupling this usage of *baptismos* with that of Heb 6:2, in which Christian Baptism is spoken of, we note that *baptismos* is a ceremonial washing or cleansing, which may be accomplished in various ways. Thus Christian Baptism is a washing, a ceremonial cleansing, and not a particular way of doing it. *Baptismos* is not an Immersion; it is not an Affusion; it is not an Aspersion -- it is a ceremonial washing with water.

To this construction agree the words of one of the most famous of all Reformed theologians, Charles Hodge:

... baptism is a washing with water. By washing is meant any such application of water to the body as effects its purification. This may be done by immersion, affusion, or sprinkling. The command, therefore, to baptize is simply a command to wash with water. It is not specifically a command to immerse, to affuse, or to sprinkle. The mode of applying water as the purifying medium is