

Baptizo

When Jesus Christ commands all true believers to be baptized, and his ministers to baptize them, what does he mean by that law?

Baptizo is the Greek word used by our Savior, in the law and it has become *anglicised* within the last three centuries, by those who did not wish the people to understand its real meaning.

If there had been any other ordinance equally disagreeable to human nature, and one they wished to alter, they probably would have transferred also the Greek of that. Common people can not know its meaning only from Greek dictionaries, and from the use of it, also, before the ordinance of baptism was *changed*.

Because, the common rule with lexicographers is to define words, in English and other dictionaries, first according to their primary meaning, and then, if any considerable portion of people, at the time, use the word in a new sense, to add that also. Dr. Webster somewhere says, we may use a word in any sense we please, if we only define what we really *do* mean by it.

Ever since the ordinance of baptism was *changed*, some two hundred years ago, by the British Parliament, and by the Westminster Assembly by a majority of one, and a new ceremony, invented by men, to supply its place, efforts have been constantly made to have *baptizo* so construed as to favor that treasonable crime against heaven.

But the Lord in his providence has laughed all these efforts to scorn. To use the word *baptizó*, according to the sense of those who have *done* this deed, is by no means ascertaining the mind of Christ.

Its modern use by the sprinklers is by no means the test. Its use before that treasonable crime, is the *only* true test. We might just as well construe the word "*pay*," in a civil law, and say it means to *run away*—to *evade*, because some in modern times use the word in that sense; as to define *baptizo* according to the use of it by those during the last two hundred years, who have in fact totally evaded its force. Our question is,—What did *Christ* mean? not what *alterations* of it have these made.

In Wilson's Christian Dictionary, 1678, baptizo is rendered to dip into the water, or plunge one into the water.

In Dr. William Young's Dictionary it is rendered to dip, all over, to wash, to baptize.

In the Greek Dictionary of Schleusner it is rendered, to immerse, to plunge, to sink into water.

In the Greek Dictionary of Charles Richardson, justly esteemed the most valuable one ever published, it is rendered, to dip, or merge in water, to sink, to plunge, to immerse.

In the Greek Dictionary of the learned John Jones, it is rendered, in the first person, I plunge, I plunge in water, I bury, I overwhelm.

(Letters on Christian Baptism; as the Initiation Ordinance into the Real Kingdom of Christ by John Flavel Bliss, Lexington, New York: Published by Levi L. Hill, 1841, 14-15, e-book; Text and paragraph structure modified)