

terianism in common with the Christian Church all through the ages has held that the mode of baptism does not matter. Any^{thing} that represents "washing with water" is true baptism. Calvin himself said, "Whether the person to be baptized is to be wholly immersed and that once or twice, or whether he is only to be sprinkled with water is not of the least consequence. Christians should be at liberty to adopt either, according to the diversity of climate. /Although it is evident," said Calvin, "that the term 'baptize' means to immerse and that this was the form used by the primitive church." Now I think Calvin was wrong on that. I don't think it is anything against that great ~~xxxxxxxxxx~~ thinker - just say that we know more about the primitive church than was known in his day, and that we know more about the original meaning of words.

The Greek word "baptisa" originally meant to put into water and leave there. The word "baptal" means to put in and take out; but "baptisa" means ^{simply} ~~to~~ to put in. And the Greeks sometimes, when they would speak of sailors being drowned, said ^{these} ~~that~~ sailors were baptized. They were put into the water and left there. That is the original meaning of the word. But in every language words gradually change their meaning and before the time when the New Testament was written the word "baptisa" had come to mean simply "washed with water." It no longer had its original meaning of putting something into water and leaving it there but it meant to "wash with water" and was used of any method of washing with water that might be used, depending on the thing or the situation. And that has been the view of the Presbyterian Church down through the ages and of practically all leaders of the Presbyterian Church. About a century ago there were a few people in this country who, irritated by the attitude of the Campbellites and certain others who said "You have got to be immersed; you are not truly a Christian unless you are immersed," said "No that is wrong, you have got to do it in one other particular form." They were going to change Presbyterianism into a mere sect. They ^{held} ~~held~~ that, so we ~~would~~ ^{will} hold the opposite, and we will say, "This is what it must be." But that is utterly contrary to the genius of Presbyterianism, which most of its leaders, nearly all of its scholars, nearly all of its creedal statements have specifically said - the method does not matter. And when