

THE ACT

OF

CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

By J. R. GRAVES

CHAP. VI. BAPTISM, BY INITIATING US INTO A LOCAL CHURCH OF CHRIST, ENTITLES US TO ALL THE PRIVILEGES AND RIGHTS OF THE CHURCH, NOT LEAST AMONG THOSE IS THE LORD'S SUPPER.

Christ has placed this sacred feast within, and under the guardianship of his local churches, and no one who has not been duly initiated according to the appointment of Christ, can partake of the Supper without profaning the feast and eating and drinking unworthily, and thereby "eating and drinking damnation to himself" (I Cor. xi).¹ By commanding every disciple to partake of the Supper, he virtually commanded him to qualify himself to do so, by being baptized into His "body"—one of his local churches.

From the above considerations we see that baptism, though not a condition of salvation, is far from being an unimportant or non-essential duty, since it is essential to our obedience to Christ, and essential to his public recognition by us as our Savior and King—essential to membership in his church and citizenship in his kingdom—essential to our highest usefulness and happiness in this life, and to receiving the highest reward and honor in the kingdom of His glory.

¹ See Tract by the Author, entitled "What is it to Eat and to Drink Unworthily?" *Price, 10 cents.*

An unwillingness to obey in the manner he has specified, and a willingness to accept a substitute, because suited to our "**tastes**, feelings, and convenience," should be convincing proof that our hearts are not in subjection to the Anointed One; that we have not the spirit of Christ, and are none of his.