on this point the remarks of Calvin are too  
important to be omitted: “Here a question arises. He says that they were *only  
baptized* in the name of the Lord Jesus,  
and consequently were not yet partakers of  
the Spirit. But either Baptism has no  
virtue and grace at all; or it has whatever  
efficacy it possesses from the Holy Spirit.  
In Baptism we are washed from sins: but  
Paul shews that this washing is the work  
of the Holy Ghost (Tit. iii. 5). The water  
of Baptism is the symbol of Christ’s blood:  
but Peter says that it is the Spirit by  
whom we are washed in the blood of  
Christ. In Baptism our old man is crucified that we may be raised into newness of  
life (Rom. vi. 6): whence is all this but by  
sanctification of the Spirit? So that Baptism will have nothing left, if it be dissociated from the Spirit. Therefore it  
must not be denied, that the Samaritans,  
who had duly put on Christ in Baptism,  
had been also invested with the Spirit  
(Gal. iii. 27). And indeed Luke here  
speaks, not of the ordinary grace of the  
Spirit by which God regenerates us as  
sons to Himself, but of those special gifts  
with which it was the Lord’s will to endow  
some persons in the beginning of the Gospel for the furnishing of the Kingdom  
of Christ.” And a little after: “The  
Papists, in their wish to extol their  
fictitious Confirmation, do not hesitate to  
go even so far as to utter this sacrilegious  
diction, that those are only half Christians,  
on whom hands have not yet been laid.  
It is intolerable that they should have  
fixed on the Church as a perpetual law,  
what was a mere temporal symbol... for  
even they themselves are obliged to confess, that the Church was only for a time  
adorned with those gifts. Whence it follows that the imposition of hands which  
the Apostles here performed, came to an  
end when its effect ceased.” The English  
church, in retaining the rite of Confirmation, *has not grounded it on any institution  
by the Apostles*, but merely declared the  
laying on of hands on the candidates, to  
certify them (by this sign) of God’s favour  
and goodness towards them, to be *‘after  
the example of the holy Apostles.’* Nor is  
there any trace in the office, of the  
*conferring of the Holy Ghost* by confirmation; but a distinct recognition of  
the *former reception* of the Holy Spirit  
(at Baptism), and a prayer for the increase  
of His influence, proportioned to the maturer life now opening on the newly confirmed. (2) If then we have here *no institution of a perpetual ordinance,* something peculiar to the case before us must  
have prompted this journey. And here  
again we have a question: Was that moving  
cause in the Samaritans, or in Philip?  
I believe the true answer to the question  
will be found by combining both. Our  
Lord’s command (ch. i. 8) had removed all  
doubt as to Samaria being a legitimate field  
for preaching, and Samaritan converts being  
admissible. (So also with regard to Gentile converts,—see ch. x., notes: but, as  
the church at this time believed, they  
must be *circumcised*, which the Samaritan  
already were,—and *keep the law*, which  
after their manner the Samaritans did.)  
The sudden appearance, however, of a body  
of baptized believers in Samaria, by the  
agency of one who was *not one of the  
Apostles*,—while it would excite in them  
every feeling of thankfulness and joy,  
would require their presence and power, as  
Apostles, to perform their especial part  
as the divinely appointed Founders of the  
Church. Add to this, that the Samaritans  
appear to have been credulous, and easily  
moved to attach themselves to individuals,  
whether it were Simon, or Philip; which  
might make the Apostles desirous to be  
present in person, and examine, and  
strengthen their faith. Another reason  
may have been not without its influence:  
the Jewish church at Jerusalem would  
naturally for the most part be alienated  
in mind from this new body of believers.  
The hatred between Jews and Samaritans  
was excessive and unrelenting. It would  
therefore be in the highest degree important that it should be shewn to the church  
at Jerusalem, that these Samaritans, by  
the agency of the same Apostles, were partakers of the same visibly testified gifts of  
the one Spirit. The use of this argument,  
which was afterwards applied by Peter in  
the case of the Gentiles, unexpected even  
by himself, ch. xi. 17,—was probably no  
small part of the purpose of this journey  
to Samaria.

**14. Peter and John**]  
Perhaps *two*, in accordance with their  
having been sent out two and two on their  
first missionary journey (Mark vi. 7): so  
Paul and Barnabas afterwards (ch. xiii. 2):  
and the same principle seems to have been  
adhered to even when these last separated:  
Paul chose Silas, Barnabas took Mark.—  
PETER,—because to him belonged, in this  
early part of the gospel, in a remarkable  
manner, the first establishing of the church;  
it was the fulfilment of the promise *“upon  
this rock I will build my church.”* It was  
he who had (in common with all the Apostles, it is true, but in this early period more