to mean, ‘*and the people when they heard  
him* (John), *were baptized into the name  
of the Lord Jesus.*’ This obviously is  
contrary to fact, historically: and would  
leave our present narrative in a singular  
state: for Paul, having treated their baptism as *insufficient*, would thus proceed on  
it to impose his hands, as if it were *sufficient*.

**in (into) the name of the  
Lord Jesus**] Two questions arise here: (1)  
Was it the ordinary practice to rebaptize  
those who had been baptized either by  
John or by the disciples (John iv. 1 f.)  
*before baptism became, by the effusion of  
the Holy Spirit, “the bath of regeneration?”* This we cannot definitely answer.  
That it was *sometimes* done, this incident  
shews: but in all probability, in the cases  
of the majority of the original disciples,  
the greater baptism by the Holy Ghost  
and fire on the day of Pentecost superseded the outward form or sign. The  
Apostles themselves received only this  
baptism (besides probably that of John):  
and most likely the same was the case with  
the original believers. But of the three  
thousand who were added on the day of  
Pentecost, very many must have been  
already baptized by John; and all were  
*rebaptized without enquiry.* (2) What  
conclusion can we deduce from this verse  
respecting the use or otherwise of baptism  
*in the name of the Father, and the Son,  
and the Holy Ghost*, in the apostolic  
period? The only answer must be, that at  
that early time we have no indication of set  
formulæ in the administration of either  
sacrament. Such formulæ arise of necessity, when precision in formal statement of  
doctrine became an absolute necessity in  
the church: and the materials for them  
were found ready in the word of God, who  
has graciously provided for all necessities of  
His church in all time. But, in matter of  
*fact*, such a baptism as this *was* a baptism  
into the name of the Father, Son, and Holy  
Ghost. As Jews, these men were already  
servants of the living God—and by putting  
on the Son, they received in a new and  
more gracious sense the Father also. And  
in the sequel of their baptism, the imposition of hands, they sensibly became recipients of God the Holy Ghost. Where  
such manifestations were present, the form  
of words might be wanting; but with us,  
who have them not, it is necessary and imperative. Mr. Howson regards (i. 517;  
ii. 13) St. Paul’s question in our ver. 3 as  
indicative that the name of the Holy Ghost  
was used in the baptismal formula. But  
the inference seems to me insecure.

**6.**] See ch. viii. 17; x. 46, and note on  
ch. ii. 4: and on the fact that they *prophesied*, ch. xi. 27, note.

**9.**] Probably the school of Tyrannus was a private  
synagogue (called Beth Midrasch by the  
Jews), where he might assemble the believing Jews quietly, and also invite the  
attendance of Gentiles to hear the word.  
But it is also possible that, as commonly  
supposed, Tyrannus may have been a Gentile sophist. The name occurs as a proper  
name, 2 Macc. iv. 40.

**10. two years**]  
We cannot derive any certain estimate of  
the length of St. Paul’s stay in Ephesus  
from these words,—even if we add the  
three months of ver. 8,—for vv. 21, 22  
admit of an *interval after the expiration  
of the two years and three months*. And  
his own expression, ch. xx. 31, *“three  
whole years*,” implies that it was longer  
than from this chapter would at first sight  
appear. He probably (compare his announced intention, 1 Cor. xvi. 8, with his  
expectation of meeting Titus at Troas, 2 Cor.  
ii. 12, 13, which shews that he was not  
far off the time previously arranged) left  
Ephesus about or soon after the third Pentecost