(emphatic) did (not, ‘*have done*,’ as A. V.,  
nor ‘*had done*,’—which in fact obscures  
the meaning: for God’s act here spoken of  
was a definite act in time—and its application to us, also a definite act in time [see below]: and if we take this verb as pluperfect,  
we confine the Apostle’s repudiation of our  
works, as moving causes of those acts of  
God, to the *time previous to those acts*.  
For aught that this pluperfect would assert,  
our salvation might be prompted on God’s  
part by future works of righteousness which  
He foresaw we should do. Whereas the  
simple past tense throws the whole into the  
same time.—“His goodness, &e. was manifested . . . not for works which we did  
. - . He saved us,”—and renders the repudiation of human merit universal), but  
according to (after the measure of, in pursuance of, after the promptings of) **His  
compassion He saved us** (this saved us  
must be referred back to the definite objective act of God in Redemption, which  
has been above mentioned. On the part of  
God, that act is one—in the application of  
it to individuals, it is composed of many  
and successive acts. But this being contemporaneous with the verb appeared above,  
cannot apply to our individual salvation  
alone. At the same time, standing as it  
does in a transitional position, between  
God’s objective act and the subjective individual application of it, it no doubt looks  
forward as well as backward—to individual  
realization of salvation, as well as to the  
divine completion of it once for all in Christ.  
—The “*us*” here is not *all mankind*, which  
would be inconsistent with what follows,  
—nor *all Christians*, however true that  
would be,—but the same as are indicated  
by “*and we*” above,—the particular Christians in the Apostle’s view us he was writing  
—Titus and his Cretan converts, and himself), **by means of the laver** (not *‘washing*,’  
as A. V., which the word cannot mean by  
any possibility: but always a vessel, or  
pool in which washing takes place. Here,  
the baptismal font: see on Eph. v. 26) **of  
regeneration** (first, let us treat of this  
word. It occurs only in Matt. xix. 28, and  
there in an objective sense, whereas here it  
is evidently subjective. There it is the  
great second birth of heaven and earth in the latter days: here the second birth of  
the individual man. Though not occurring  
elsewhere in this sense, it has its cognate  
expressions. Then, of the *genitive*, of  
regeneration. ‘The font is the ‘laver of  
regeneration,’ because it is the vessel consecrated to the use of that Sacrament  
whereby, in its *completeness* as a Sacrament [see below], the new life unto God is  
conveyed. And inasmuch as it is in that  
font, and when we are in it, that the first  
breath of that life is drawn, it is the font  
of,—belonging to, pertaining to, setting  
forth, —regeneration.—Observe, there is  
here no figure: the words are literal: Baptism is taken as in all its completion,—the  
outward visible sign accompanied by the  
inward spiritual grace; and as thus complete, it not only represents, but is, the  
new birth. The font then, the laver of regeneration, representing the external portion of the Sacrament, and pledging the  
internal,—that *inward and spiritual grace*,  
necessary to the completion of the Sacrament and its regenerating power, is not,  
as too often, left to follow as a matter of  
course, and thus baptismal regeneration  
rendered a mere formal and unmeaning  
thing, ‘ex opere operato,’—but is distinctly  
stated in the following words), **and** (understand through again: so Theodoret and  
Bengel, who says, “Two things are spoken  
of: the laver of regeneration, which is a  
way of expressing baptism into Christ, and  
the renewing of the Holy Ghost.” On the  
other hand, most Commentators [see Ellicott here] take *renewing* as a second genitive after *font* (of regeneration and of the  
renewing, &c.) the renewal (the word is  
used of the gradual renewal of heart and  
life in the image of God, following upon  
the new birth, and without which the birth  
is a mere abortion, not leading on to vitality and action. It is here treated as potentially involved in God’s act of saving us.  
We must not, for the sake of making it  
contemporaneous with the laver of baptism,  
give it another and untenable meaning,  
that of mere incipient spiritual life) **of**  
(brought about by; genitive of the efficient  
cause) **the Holy Spirit** (who alone can renew unto life in progressive sanctification.  
So that, as in 1 Pet. iii. 21, it is not the  
  
  
  
s