



John Muir Correspondence (PDFs)

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1870-04-10

**Letter from Charles W. Moores to John Muir, 1870 Apr 10.**

Charles W. Moores

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**Recommended Citation**

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[43]

in connection with the religious  
training which is supposed  
to follow it is likely to do very  
much good.

I was baptized three times  
this morning. 1<sup>st</sup> (according  
to the old way of directing a sermon  
in balmy sunshine that pen-  
etrated to my very soul, warming  
all the faculties of a spirit, as well  
as the joints & marrow of the  
body; 2<sup>d</sup> in the mysterious  
rays of beauty that emanate  
from plunk corollas; 3<sup>d</sup>  
in the spray of the lower Yosemite  
falls. My 1<sup>st</sup> baptism  
was by immersion. The 2<sup>d</sup>  
by pouring, & the 3<sup>d</sup> by sprinkling.  
Consequently, all baptisms are  
my brethering & all will allow  
that I've "got religion."

00505

[11]

Yosemite not dated Baptism &c  
[1870]

Balmy Sabbath morning in  
Yosemite Apr 10<sup>th</sup>

Dear Brother

Your geographical religious  
& commercial letter was hand-  
ed me this morning by a  
little black-eyed witch of a girl,  
the only one in the valley -  
I also recd your note of  
Feb 8<sup>th</sup> in due time (that  
is any time) I'd propose  
to answer them as one  
thus accomplishing two  
at a blow' but I am  
bewildered by the magnitude  
& number of the subjects of which  
they treat. I think that since  
my pen is perturbed by too  
big a quantum of levity for  
Sabbath writing I shall begin  
with baptism hoping that my

muddy ink & muddy thoughts will settle to the seriousness or anger that naturally belongs to the subject

I do not like the doctrine of close communion as held by hard shells, because the whole clumsy structure of the thing rests upon a foundation of coarse-grained dogmatism —

Imperious, bold upright exclusiveness upon any subject is hateful, but it becomes absolutely hideous & impious in matters of religion, where all men are equally interested —

I have no patience at all for the man who complacently wipes his pious lips & waves me away from a simple rite which commemorates the love & sacrifice of Christ — telling me "Go out from us for you are not of us", & all this not for want of Christian

love  
"on my part, or the practice of self denying virtues in seeking to elevate myself; but simply because in his infallible judgement I am mistaken in the number of quarts of that common liquid we call water which should be made use of in baptism — — — — —

I think infant baptism by sprinkling or any other mode is a beautiful & impressive ordinance, & however the scripture of the thing is interpreted no parents can be doing an unseemly or unchristian act in dedicating a child to God & taking upon him vows to lead his child in the path that all good people believed in. The baptism of an old sinner is apt to do but little good but the baptism of an infant