

July 4, 2021

## Bible Baptism

by Dee Bowman

I am at a loss to explain why the brilliant Bible commentators, in an almost united front, are opposed to baptism as a necessity for the remission of sins. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be" (Mark 16:16). What could that possibly mean except that a man who believes must then be baptized in order to be saved? If I say, "He that goes to the store and brings me a loaf of bread and a gallon of milk shall be rewarded," how would you interpret that? "Well," someone says, "it also says that 'he that believeth not shall be condemned'—nothing about baptism." Now I ask you, does the last part of the verse negate the first part? And would it not be foolish to be baptized when you didn't even believe? To adopt that argument makes Jesus speak against Himself.

As a matter of fact, the Bible teaches that baptism is necessary for the forgiveness of sins. In Acts 22:16, Ananias came to Saul and said, "and now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." In 1 Peter 3:21, Peter said, "the like figure whereunto baptism doth now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience before God), by the resurrection from the dead." Peter, in the first recorded sermon on the day of Pentecost, told the people to "repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins..." (Acts 2:38). What do

you do with such passages? Did Ananias, who was chosen of God to preach the gospel to Saul of Tarsus, tell him to do something he did not need do? Did Peter, speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, affirm that baptism was for the remission of sins, when indeed it was not? And did Peter, who was endowed with the Spirit of God (Acts 2:4), call upon the people who heard him to do something that was contrary to the Spirit which prompted him?

Actually, in all nine cases of conversion recorded in the book of Acts of the Apostles, baptism is either directly commanded or necessarily implied as being necessary to salvation. Bible baptism is necessary to salvation.

It needs to be noted, too, that baptism is for believers. Religious groups who "baptize" babies (most of them don't baptize babies at all, they sprinkle them), do so without the authority of the Scriptures. Baptism is never mentioned for non-believers, but for those who have heard and believed the gospel. Notice the passage in Mark 16:16 again. "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved," it says. If belief is all that is necessary, then it would be good to take some kind of strong group and go out into the streets and forcibly baptize people so they could be saved. The little babies have nothing at all to say about whether or not they want to be "baptized." Bible baptism is for those who "believe that Jesus Christ is the Son

## Welcome!

When you visit our assemblies, you will be received friendly, kindly and courteously. We believe this to be the natural attitude of those who truly love God and mankind. Though you may at first be among strangers, we hope that you will come to know us well and count us as your friends.

**We offer Bible studies as well as correspondence courses for those interested in learning more about what God expects of us.**

## Important Dates

Bulverde is having their summer series "Gifts We Can Use For God" each Thursday through August 19.

The Lakewood Drive church of Christ in Georgetown will be having a singing on July 17 at 6:00 p.m.

*If you know of upcoming events, please inform Darrell so they can be included here.*

of God” (Acts 8:36-37).

Furthermore, Bible baptism is a burial. People have no right to change the word of God to fit their own whims and fancies. Bible baptism is immersion, not sprinkling or pouring. In the story of the conversion of the Ethiopian nobleman, Luke states “And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him” (Acts 8:38). Paul says, in Romans 6:3-4, “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.” The same Apostle, again writing by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit, said to the Colossians, we are “buried with him by baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead” (2:12). Again, I ask you: what will you do with the passages? Do they state the will of God on the matter of the mode of baptism? Do they give any indication as to how he expects baptism should be administered? Surely we can see that. Bible baptism is immersion; that’s a fact.

These simple statements of Scripture cannot be ignored. That person who takes it upon himself to follow some church’s traditional view on baptism runs risks that are not only dangerous, but absolutely foolish. God emphatically states that every person is responsible for consulting His word to find the means for his salvation from his sins. “Ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free,” He says (John 8:32). The Bible is the final authority on any religious matter (I Peter 4:11).

Let us not put our confidence in human wisdom (1 Corinthians 1:18-24). Human creeds serve only to divide, confuse, and make trouble. The word of God is sufficient and is without any need for addition or

subtraction (2 Timothy 3:16-17); in fact, will tolerate none (Galatians 1:6-9). That word tells us what God expects, not what men have devised. It tells us His way (Isaiah 55:8-9). We should be dubious of any doctrine or practice for which we cannot find a “thus saith the Lord.”

## Prayer Requests

**Jack Wilson** is at home but not up for visitors at this time.

**Doug Adair** is struggling with back pain. His second opinion still recommended surgery.

**Jerry Richardson** is still undergoing cancer treatments.

**Nancy Richardson** is doing better but still dealing with breathing problems.

**Karen Hallmark** has improved but is still struggling with her health and her eyes.

**Morgan O’Hair** is waiting to see another doctor to treat an infection.

**Dinah Williams** continues to be homebound due to mobility issues. She had a small fire at her house last week and is staying at the Comfort Inn while repairs are being made.

**Bobbie Gibbons** continues to be limited by balance and breathing issues.

**Tyler Hairston** has cancer.

**Don and Alene Simmons** are both suffering from pain and mobility limitations.

**Dorthy Steadman** is continuing to recover from her recent stroke. She is staying with Hank in Houston.

**Gordon Calley** will be having a procedure on July 9 and the family requests prayers on his behalf.

If you know of someone that needs to be on this list, please tell Darrell (email preferred) and provide updates so names stay on the list as long as needed.

“praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,”  
(Ephesians 6:18 ESV)

The Oaks West church of Christ is a group of individual Christians who have been added to the Lord’s body through baptism (Acts 2:38, 47; Gal 3:26, 27), and have joined themselves together (Acts 2:42ff) in an effort to do the Lord’s will.

We are not a part of any larger organization - we do not follow any man-made creeds and we do not answer to anyone other than the Lord.

Our standard of faith and practice is the Word of God. We believe in the God of revelation (Eph 3:1-7; 2 Tim 3:16-17) and follow his instructions in an effort to have an ongoing relationship with him (1 John 4:7-11; 5:3).

Our times of study and worship are open to all, and our members are happy to meet with interested individuals or families for study.

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