

# — REAL — BAPTISM

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Charles F. Baker



# **REAL BAPTISM**

**RELIGIOUS RITUAL OR SPIRITUAL REALITY?**

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Most books which have been written on the subject of baptism have been occupied entirely with trying to prove a certain mode of baptism, and writers from all denominations seem to have been successful in finding quotations from the fathers of church history to substantiate their varied and contradictory practices. Church history is important and Christians should be familiar with it, but it should never be permitted to become the authority for our belief or practice. The more familiar one becomes with the subject, the more evident it becomes that the Church in its historical development has strayed far from God's Word, which Protestants as a whole profess to be their sole basis of faith and practice.

A need has often been expressed for a study on baptism which would deal with every reference to the subject in the Bible. Such a treatise would enable the average Christian to study with understanding and to come to his own conclusions on this subject which has been so highly controversial and divisive within the professing church. Sincere Christians when confronted by such a problem will always ask with Paul, "What saith the Scriptures?"

This present work on baptism is an endeavor to answer that question. It has been entitled *Real Baptism*. Theologians refer to spiritual baptism as *real* to distinguish it from *ritual* or water baptism. Of course, both spiritual and ritual baptism are real in their particular spheres, but the spiritual is more real in that it is wrought by God and is enduring; whereas the ritual is done by man and is not only temporary in nature, but may not in itself accomplish anything whatsoever. In the words of Paul:

...we look not at things which are seen [the physical], but at things which are not seen [the spiritual]; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal (2 Cor. 4:18).

This title has been chosen, not because the subject of ritual baptism has been omitted, but because the great majority of professing Christians know nothing but the ritual and seem to be completely ignorant of the existence of the real. It is to be hoped that the title may serve to awaken some such folk to see their need for God's reality; for it is evident from the Scripture that only real baptism can make one a member of the Church which is Christ's body. If one has ritual baptism and does not have the real, he is not saved. And if one has the real baptism which has put him into Christ and has made him a joint-sharer of all that is Christ's, the question naturally arises, what need is there after that for the ritual?

## METHOD OF TREATMENT

In the pages that follow, every one of the 106 references to baptism in the Bible will be taken up under logical headings, so that whether or not you agree with the conclusions of the writer, you will have brought to your attention all that the Bible has to say about this subject. *Englishman's Greek Concordance* has been used as a basis for checking all references and these have been cross-checked by William Greenfield's abridgment of the concordance of Schmidt, published by Samuel Bagster & Sons, Limited. You can therefore be reasonably sure that the biblical list of references is complete and exhaustive.

There are five different words in the Greek New Testament which come from the same root, and which will be the basis for this study. In this first lesson we will give a complete concordance of each word with a brief comment on the meaning of the words.

First, *BAPTO* -- This is a verb which is used three times in the New Testament and is always translated "dip." It never has reference to either real or ritual baptism, but it is here mentioned because it belongs to the same family as the baptism words. It was used especially in reference to dipping a cloth into a dye. References: [Luke 16:24](#); [John 13:26](#); [Revelation 19:13](#).

Second, *BAPTISTES* -- In Greek nouns the suffix TES (long E as in prey) indicates the agent performing the action. It is the epithet used of the forerunner of Christ, John the Baptist. It is used fourteen times and in all cases refers to John. Since the word has no doctrinal bearing, it is not discussed further in the main body of the following chapters. References: [Matthew 3:1](#); [11:11,12](#); [14:2,8](#); [16:14](#); [17:13](#); [Mark 6:24,25](#); [8:28](#); [Luke 7:20, 28, 33](#); [9:19](#).

Third, *BAPTIZO* (pronounced bap-tid'-zo) -- This is the verb meaning to baptize. It is always translated "baptize," except in Luke 11:38, where it is "washed." It is used eighty times in the New Testament. In one of these references ([Mark 6:14](#)), the participle form of the verb is used of John: "John the one baptizing." This leaves seventy-nine occurrences of the verb, contained in the following sixty-four verses, which will be considered in detail later:

### Matthew

Chapter 3:

- 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.
- 11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:
- 13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of

him.

14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?

16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

Chapter 20:

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Chapter 28:

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

## **Mark**

Chapter 1:

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.

9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

Chapter 7:

4 And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.

Chapter 10:

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

Chapter 16:

16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

## **Luke**

Chapter 3:

7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?

16 John answered, saying unto them all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:

21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,

Chapter 7:

29 And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

Chapter 11:

38 And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

Chapter 12:

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

## **John**

Chapter 1:

25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?

26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;



28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.

31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.

#### Chapter 3:

22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.

23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.

26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.

#### Chapter 4:

1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,

2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

#### Chapter 10:

40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.

## Acts

#### Chapter 1:

5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

#### Chapter 2:

38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

#### Chapter 8:

12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)

36 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

38 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.

Chapter 9:

18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

Chapter 10:

47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?

48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Chapter 11:

16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.

Chapter 16:

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

Chapter 18:

8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

Chapter 19:

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Chapter 22:

16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

## **Romans**

Chapter 6:

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

## **I Corinthians**

Chapter 1:

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Chapter 10:

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

Chapter 12:

13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Chapter 15:

29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?

## Galatians

Chapter 3:

27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Fourth, *BAPTISMA* -- The ending MA in Greek nouns indicates the result of the action expressed in the verb. This word is always translated "baptism" and occurs twenty-two times in the New Testament as follows:

## Matthew

Chapter 3:

7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

Chapter 20:

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Chapter 21:

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

## Mark

Chapter 1:

4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Chapter 10:

38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?

39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:

Chapter 11:

30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.

## **Luke**

Chapter 3:

3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;

Chapter 7:

29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.

Chapter 12:

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

Chapter 20:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

## **Acts**

Chapter 1:

22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.

Chapter 10:

37 That word, *I say*, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;

Chapter 13:

24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

Chapter 18:

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

Chapter 19:

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

## **Romans**

Chapter 6:

- 4 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.

## **Ephesians**

Chapter 4:

- 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

## **Colossians**

Chapter 2:

- 12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

## **I Peter**

Chapter 3:

- 21 The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Fifth, *BAPTISMOS* -- The ending *MOS* in Greek nouns indicates the action of the verb. This word is used four times in the New Testament and translated "washing" three times and "baptisms" once; [Mark 7:4,8](#); [Hebrews 6:2](#); [9:10](#).

## **SUMMARY OF USAGE**

The above concordance shows that the three words *BAPTIZO*, *BAPTISMA*, and *BAPTISMOS* occur a total of 106 times in ninety-one verses of Scripture. Actually, all of these occurrences of the words combine in comparatively few passages of Scripture. It is suggested that you take either an old discarded Bible or an inexpensive New Testament and cut out the following passages and put them in a notebook. This will bring all of the passages together in their contexts and enable you to read them over a sufficient number of times to familiarize yourself with all that the Bible has to say about baptism. These can either be arranged in the order they are found in the Bible, or since the four Gospels contain a number of parallel passages, these can all be grouped together. You should clip the following passages.

## **Matthew**

Chapter 3:

- 1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea,  
2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

- 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
- 4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey.
- 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan,
- 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins.
- 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
- 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:
- 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.
- 10 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: therefore every tree which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
- 11 I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and *with* fire:
- 12 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and gather his wheat into the garner; but he will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.
- 13 Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.
- 14 But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me?
- 15 And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be* so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfil all righteousness. Then he suffered him.
- 16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him:

17 And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

Chapter 20:

20 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping *him*, and desiring a certain thing of him.

21 And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on the left, in thy kingdom.

22 But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able.

23 And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Chapter 21:

23 And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority?

24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things.

25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him?

26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet.

Chapter 28:

18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.

19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:

20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, *even* unto the end of the world. Amen.



## Mark

### Chapter 1:

- 1 The beginning of the gospel of Jesus Christ, the Son of God;
- 2 As it is written in the prophets, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
- 3 The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.
- 4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.
- 5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.
- 6 And John was clothed with camel's hair, and with a girdle of a skin about his loins; and he did eat locusts and wild honey;
- 7 And preached, saying, There cometh one mightier than I after me, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to stoop down and unloose.
- 8 I indeed have baptized you with water: but he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost.
- 9 And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan.

### Chapter 7:

- 1 Then came together unto him the Pharisees, and certain of the scribes, which came from Jerusalem.
- 2 And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen, hands, they found fault.
- 3 For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash *their* hands oft, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders.
- 4 And *when they come* from the market, except they wash, they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing of cups, and pots, brasen vessels, and of tables.
- 5 Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen hands?

- 6 He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with *their* lips, but their heart is far from me.
- 7 Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching *for* doctrines the commandments of men.
- 8 For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups: and many other such like things ye do.
- 9 And he said unto them, Full well ye reject the commandment of God, that ye may keep your own tradition.

Chapter 10:

- 35 And James and John, the sons of Zebedee, come unto him, saying, Master, we would that thou shouldest do for us whatsoever we shall desire.
- 36 And he said unto them, What would ye that I should do for you?
- 37 They said unto him, Grant unto us that we may sit, one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left hand, in thy glory.
- 38 But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?
- 39 And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized:
- 40 But to sit on my right hand and on my left hand is not mine to give; but *it shall be given to them* for whom it is prepared.

Chapter 11:

- 29 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I will also ask of you one question, and answer me, and I will tell you by what authority I do these things.
- 30 The baptism of John, was *it* from heaven, or of men? answer me.
- 31 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then did ye not believe him?
- 32 But if we shall say, Of men; they feared the people: for all *men* counted John, that he was a prophet indeed.

- 33 And they answered and said unto Jesus, We cannot tell. And Jesus answering saith unto them, Neither do I tell you by what authority I do these things.

#### Chapter 16:

- 14 Afterward he appeared unto the eleven as they sat at meat, and upbraided them with their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they believed not them which had seen him after he was risen.
- 15 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.
- 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.
- 17 And these signs shall follow them that believe; In my name shall they cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues;
- 18 They shall take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them; they shall lay hands on the sick, and they shall recover.
- 19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.
- 20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with *them*, and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

## Luke

#### Chapter 3:

- 1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene,
- 2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness.
- 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;
- 4 As it is written in the book of the words of Esaias the prophet, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.

- 5 Every valley shall be filled, and every mountain and hill shall be brought low; and the crooked shall be made straight, and the rough ways *shall be* made smooth;
- 6 And all flesh shall see the salvation of God.
- 7 Then said he to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
- 8 Bring forth therefore fruits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to *our* father: for I say unto you, That God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.
- 9 And now also the axe is laid unto the root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire.
- 10 And the people asked him, saying, What shall we do then?
- 11 He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath meat, let him do likewise.
- 12 Then came also publicans to be baptized, and said unto him, Master, what shall we do?
- 13 And he said unto them, Exact no more than that which is appointed you.
- 14 And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying, And what shall we do? And he said unto them, Do violence to no man, neither accuse *any* falsely; and be content with your wages.
- 15 And as the people were in expectation, and all men mused in their hearts of John, whether he were the Christ, or not;
- 16 John answered, saying unto *them* all, I indeed baptize you with water; but one mightier than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unloose: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire:
- 17 Whose fan *is* in his hand, and he will thoroughly purge his floor, and will gather the wheat into his garner; but the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable.
- 18 And many other things in his exhortation preached he unto the people.
- 19 But Herod the tetrarch, being reprov'd by him for Herodias his brother Philip's wife, and for all the evils which Herod had done,

- 20 Added yet this above all, that he shut up John in prison.
- 21 Now when all the people were baptized, it came to pass, that Jesus also being baptized, and praying, the heaven was opened,
- 22 And the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape like a dove upon him, and a voice came from heaven, which said, Thou art my beloved Son; in thee I am well pleased.

Chapter 7:

- 24 And when the messengers of John were departed, he began to speak unto the people concerning John, What went ye out into the wilderness for to see? A reed shaken with the wind?
- 25 But what went ye out for to see? A man clothed in soft raiment? Behold, they which are gorgeously apparelled, and live delicately, are in kings' courts.
- 26 But what went ye out for to see? A prophet? Yea, I say unto you, and much more than a prophet.
- 27 This is *he*, of whom it is written, Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.
- 28 For I say unto you, Among those that are born of women there is not a greater prophet than John the Baptist: but he that is least in the kingdom of God is greater than he.
- 29 And all the people that heard *him*, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John.
- 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.
- 31 And the Lord said, Whereunto then shall I liken the men of this generation? and to what are they like?
- 32 They are like unto children sitting in the marketplace, and calling one to another, and saying, We have piped unto you, and ye have not danced; we have mourned to you, and ye have not wept.
- 33 For John the Baptist came neither eating bread nor drinking wine; and ye say, He hath a devil.
- 34 The Son of man is come eating and drinking; and ye say, Behold a gluttonous man, and a winebibber, a friend of publicans and sinners!

35 But wisdom is justified of all her children.

Chapter 11:

37 And as he spake, a certain Pharisee besought him to dine with him: and he went in, and sat down to meat.

38 And when the Pharisee saw *it*, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.

39 And the Lord said unto him, Now do ye Pharisees make clean the outside of the cup and the platter; but your inward part is full of ravening and wickedness.

Chapter 12:

49 I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled?

50 But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!

51 Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division:

52 For from henceforth there shall be five in one house divided, three against two, and two against three.

53 The father shall be divided against the son, and the son against the father; the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother; the mother in law against her daughter in law, and the daughter in law against her mother in law.

Chapter 20:

1 And it came to pass, *that* on one of those days, as he taught the people in the temple, and preached the gospel, the chief priests and the scribes came upon *him* with the elders,

2 And spake unto him, saying, Tell us, by what authority doest thou these things? or who is he that gave thee this authority?

3 And he answered and said unto them, I will also ask you one thing; and answer me:

4 The baptism of John, was it from heaven, or of men?

- 5 And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say, Why then believed ye him not?
- 6 But and if we say, Of men; all the people will stone us: for they be persuaded that John was a prophet.
- 7 And they answered, that they could not tell whence *it was*.
- 8 And Jesus said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.

## John

### Chapter 1:

- 15 John bare witness of him, and cried, saying, This was he of whom I spake, He that cometh after me is preferred before me: for he was before me.
- 16 And of his fulness have all we received, and grace for grace.
- 17 For the law was given by Moses, *but* grace and truth came by Jesus Christ.
- 18 No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared *him*.
- 19 And this is the record of John, when the Jews sent priests and Levites from Jerusalem to ask him, Who art thou?
- 20 And he confessed, and denied not; but confessed, I am not the Christ.
- 21 And they asked him, What then? Art thou Elias? And he saith, I am not. Art thou that prophet? And he answered, No.
- 22 Then said they unto him, Who art thou? that we may give an answer to them that sent us. What sayest thou of thyself?
- 23 He said, I *am* the voice of one crying in the wilderness, Make straight the way of the Lord, as said the prophet Esaias.
- 24 And they which were sent were of the Pharisees.
- 25 And they asked him, and said unto him, Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet?
- 26 John answered them, saying, I baptize with water: but there standeth one among you, whom ye know not;

- 27 He it is, who coming after me is preferred before me, whose shoe's latchet I am not worthy to unloose.
- 28 These things were done in Bethabara beyond Jordan, where John was baptizing.
- 29 The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.
- 30 This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me.
- 31 And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.
- 32 And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him.
- 33 And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost.
- 34 And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God.

#### Chapter 3:

- 22 After these things came Jesus and his disciples into the land of Judaea; and there he tarried with them, and baptized.
- 23 And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized.
- 24 For John was not yet cast into prison.
- 25 Then there arose a question between *some* of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying.
- 26 And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all *men* come to him.
- 27 John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven.
- 28 Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before him.



- 29 He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled.
- 30 He must increase, but I *must* decrease.
- 31 He that cometh from above is above all: he that is of the earth is earthly, and speaketh of the earth: he that cometh from heaven is above all.
- 32 And what he hath seen and heard, that he testifieth; and no man receiveth his testimony.
- 33 He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true.
- 34 For he whom God hath sent speaketh the words of God: for God giveth not the Spirit by measure *unto him*.
- 35 The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand.
- 36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.
- 1 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John,
- 2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

Chapter 10:

- 39 Therefore they sought again to take him: but he escaped out of their hand,
- 40 And went away again beyond Jordan into the place where John at first baptized; and there he abode.
- 41 And many resorted unto him, and said, John did no miracle: but all things that John spake of this man were true.
- 42 And many believed on him there.

## Acts

Chapter 1:

- 4 And, being assembled together with *them*, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, *saith he*, ye have heard of me.
- 5 For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence.

- 6 When they therefore were come together, they asked of him, saying, Lord, wilt thou at this time restore again the kingdom to Israel?
- 7 And he said unto them, It is not for you to know the times or the seasons, which the Father hath put in his own power.
- 21 Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us,
- 22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection.
- 23 And they appointed two, Joseph called Barsabas, who was surnamed Justus, and Matthias.
- 24 And they prayed, and said, Thou, Lord, which knowest the hearts of all *men*, shew whether of these two thou hast chosen,
- 25 That he may take part of this ministry and apostleship, from which Judas by transgression fell, that he might go to his own place.
- 26 And they gave forth their lots; and the lot fell upon Matthias; and he was numbered with the eleven apostles.

#### Chapter 2:

- 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.
- 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, *even* as many as the Lord our God shall call.
- 40 And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation.
- 41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added *unto them* about three thousand souls.

#### Chapter 8:

- 12 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

- 13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.
- 14 Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John:
- 15 Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost:
- 16 (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.)
- 17 Then laid they *their* hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost.
- 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus.
- 36 And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?
- 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.
- 38 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.
- 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

#### Chapter 9:

- 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.
- 19 And when he had received meat, he was strengthened. Then was Saul certain days with the disciples which were at Damascus.

#### Chapter 10:

- 34 Then Peter opened *his* mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons:
- 35 But in every nation he that feareth him, and worketh righteousness, is accepted with him.

- 36 The word which *God* sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (he is Lord of all:)
- 37 That word, *I say*, ye know, which was published throughout all Judaea, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached;
- 38 How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.
- 39 And we are witnesses of all things which he did both in the land of the Jews, and in Jerusalem; whom they slew and hanged on a tree:
- 40 Him God raised up the third day, and shewed him openly;
- 41 Not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, *even* to us, who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead.
- 42 And he commanded us to preach unto the people, and to testify that it is he which was ordained of God *to be* the Judge of quick and dead.
- 43 To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins.
- 44 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word.
- 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost.
- 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter,
- 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?
- 48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

#### Chapter 11:

- 16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost.
- 17 Forasmuch then as God gave them the like gift as *he did* unto us, who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ; what was I, that I could withstand God?

Chapter 13:

24 When John had first preached before his coming the baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel.

25 And as John fulfilled his course, he said, Whom think ye that I am? I am not *he*. But, behold, there cometh one after me, whose shoes of *his* feet I am not worthy to loose.

Chapter 16:

14 And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard *us*: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul.

15 And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought *us*, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide *there*. And she constrained us.

29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas,

30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved?

31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.

32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.

33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed *their* stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

34 And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and rejoiced, believing in God with all his house.

Chapter 18:

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain *man's* house, named Justus, *one* that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue.

8 And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

24 And a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, *and* mighty in the scriptures, came to Ephesus.

25 This man was instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in the spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John.

26 And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto *them*, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly.

#### Chapter 19:

1 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples,

2 He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost.

3 And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism.

4 Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.

5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

6 And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

7 And all the men were about twelve.

8 And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God.

#### Chapter 22:

12 And one Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good report of all the Jews which dwelt *there*,

13 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him.

14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth.

15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.

16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

## Romans

### Chapter 6:

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound?

2 God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?

3 Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

4 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.

5 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of *his* resurrection:

6 Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin.

7 For he that is dead is freed from sin.

## I Corinthians

### Chapter 1:

11 For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house* of Chloe, that there are contentions among you.

12 Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas; and I of Christ.

13 Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

14 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius;

15 Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.

16 And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other.

- 17 For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Chapter 10:

- 1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;
- 2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;
- 3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;
- 4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

Chapter 12:

- 12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also *is* Christ.
- 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

Chapter 15:

- 29 Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead?
- 30 And why stand we in jeopardy every hour?
- 31 I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I die daily.
- 32 If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, what advantageth it me, if the dead rise not? let us eat and drink; for to morrow we die.

## **Galatians**

Chapter 3:

- 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.
- 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
- 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

## **Ephesians**

Chapter 4:



- 1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
- 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;
- 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
- 4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;
- 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,
- 6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

## **Colossians**

Chapter 2:

- 10 And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power:
- 11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:
- 12 Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with *him* through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.
- 13 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses;
- 14 Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;
- 15 *And* having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

## **Hebrews**

Chapter 6:

- 1 Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God,
- 2 Of the doctrine of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

3 And this will we do, if God permit.

Chapter 9:

8 The Holy Ghost this signifying, that the way into the holiest of all was not yet made manifest, while as the first tabernacle was yet standing:

9 Which *was* a figure for the time then present, in which were offered both gifts and sacrifices, that could not make him that did the service perfect, as pertaining to the conscience;

10 *Which stood* only in meats and drinks, and divers washings, and carnal ordinances, imposed *on them* until the time of reformation.

11 But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building;

12 Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption *for us*.

13 For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh:

14 How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?

## I Peter

Chapter 3:

18 For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit:

19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison;

20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water.

21 The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

22 Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

## OUTLINE OF STUDY

It is doubtless a great surprise to the many who have never taken time to study this subject to discover that there are at least twelve different kinds of baptism referred to in the New Testament, and that of the twelve only five have any connection with a water ceremony. It will be the plan of this study to take up these twelve kinds of baptism:

- ◆ Christ Baptizing with the Holy Spirit
- ◆ The Holy Spirit Baptizing into the Body of Christ
- ◆ Death Baptism
- ◆ The Baptism of Fire
- ◆ The Typical Baptism of Noah's Ark
- ◆ Baptism for the Dead
- ◆ Baptism into Moses
- ◆ The Divers Baptisms of the Law
- ◆ Traditional Jewish Baptisms
- ◆ John's Baptism of Israel for the Remission of Sins
- ◆ Christ's Baptism by John to Fulfill All Righteousness
- ◆ The Pentecostal Baptism for the Remission of Sins

One chapter will be devoted to the many conflicting interpretations about water baptism, another chapter to the mode of baptism according to the Scriptures, and another chapter will take up the question of why Paul practiced water baptism when he definitely stated that Christ did not send him to baptize.

### QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER

1. Is Church history a reliable source for doctrine and practice?
2. What fact concerning baptism does Church history clearly reveal?
3. What should the sincere Christian ask when confronted by any spiritual questions?
4. What is meant by "real" baptism?
5. Are the majority of Christians acquainted with ritual or with real baptism, or with both?
6. Is either ritual or real baptism necessary for salvation today? If so, which one is necessary?
7. What are the three Greek words which will be the basis for this study?
8. What references under *baptizo* and *baptismos* would indicate to you

that the words do not mean to immerse?

9. How many times are the words *baptizo*, *baptisma*, and *baptismos* used in the New Testament? To how many passages can these many uses of the words be narrowed down?
10. What are the twelve different kinds of baptism mentioned in the New Testament? How many of these baptisms have no reference to the use of water ceremonially?

## CHAPTER 2

### CHRIST BAPTIZING WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT

Under this heading we will consider every occurrence of the word "baptism" where it is used in association with the name of the Holy Spirit. There can be no doubt but that these passages refer to a spiritual work in contrast to a ritual.

1. I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.

These words of John the Baptist are reported by all four of the Evangelists - [Matthew 3:11](#); [Mark 1:8](#); [Luke 3:16](#); [John 1:33](#).

2. After His resurrection, Christ told His apostles:

...wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. For John truly baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence ([Acts 1:4,5](#)).

This baptism took place, as we know, at Pentecost.

3. Some eight years later Peter was sent to preach to Cornelius. Peter tells us:

And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost ([Acts 11:15,16](#)).

4. In only one other passage is the name of the Holy Spirit used in connection with baptism. Paul, writing to members of the Body of Christ, states:

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit ([1 Corinthians 12:13](#)).

#### MEANING OF THESE SCRIPTURES

It has been the practice of Bible teachers to make all of the above

passages refer to exactly the same thing, since the name of the Holy Spirit is associated with the baptism in each case. But this is not necessarily true. It is evident, of course, that 1. and 2. and 3. above refer to exactly the same work of the Spirit in baptism, but the Scripture under 4. is diverse in many ways, as we shall soon see.

In the former group of Scriptures it is plainly stated that Christ is the Baptizer, and that He will baptize with the Holy Ghost. Paul, on the other hand, represents the Holy Spirit as the Baptizer, who baptizes us into Christ. The Persons of the Godhead and their work are always kept distinct in the Scriptures. We should not expect to find Christ baptizing into Christ any more than we would expect to read about the Holy Spirit sending the Holy Spirit. The Father and the Son send the Holy Spirit. At Pentecost Christ baptized with the Holy Spirit. In I Corinthians the Holy Spirit baptizes into Christ. It is important to note that these are two separate and distinct baptisms.

There is nothing stated or even implied in the account of the Pentecostal Spirit baptism about the formation of a Body in which there was neither Jew nor Gentile. As a matter of fact, only Jews received this baptism at Pentecost. There is no record of a Gentile even being saved until some eight years later. These believing Jews at Pentecost did not lose their identity with Israel. They continued daily in the temple. There was no indication of any departure from the clearly outlined plan for the establishment of Israel in the messianic Kingdom as revealed in the Old Testament prophets.

What a difference we find when we come to Paul. There Israel has been cast aside and the kingdom hopes have been deferred. God has inaugurated an entirely new and different dispensation. It is no longer an earthly kingdom, but a heavenly Body which is in view. It is no longer the Jew first, and then the Gentile being blessed through the Jew; for in this new Body there is neither Jew nor Gentile. And the point which is especially germane to our present discussion is the one and only thing which is accomplished by the Spirit's baptism of which Paul speaks -- we are put into that Body and are made members of that Body in particular.

Not only so, but Peter, under inspiration of the Spirit of God, plainly informs us that when Christ baptized with the Holy Spirit it was in fulfillment of Joel's prophecy:

This is that which was spoken by the prophet Joel (Acts 2:16).

If this Spirit baptism at Pentecost was that which formed the Body of Christ, then Joel must have predicted the formation of the Body of Christ. But Paul is equally explicit that neither Joel nor any other prophet in ages and generations past predicted anything about the Body of Christ. He declares that it was a secret hidden in God and never before revealed to men ([Eph. 3:1-9](#); [Col.](#)

1:24-28).

There can be only one conclusion: the Spirit baptism of which Joel spoke and which occurred at Pentecost must be different from the Spirit baptism which forms the Body of Christ about which none of the prophets ever spoke.

There is yet another great difference between these two baptisms. The Pentecostal baptism was experiential; the baptism into the Body is not. Christ said:

And behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you, but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high (Luke 24:49).

In Acts 1:8 Christ said:

But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you ....

This was clearly a baptism of power, and of miraculous demonstrations. There was a sound from heaven as of a rushing, mighty wind. There appeared cloven tongues as of fire which sat upon the apostles. They spake with other languages. This baptism was so experiential that all Jerusalem was in an uproar.

In striking contrast to this, the baptism which places us in the Body of Christ is not at all apparent to the senses. It is not experiential. One may get saved, and not learn until months or years later that at the moment he was saved, at that same moment he was baptized by the Spirit into the Body.

The non-experiential nature of this baptism has caused certain Baptists to suppose there is no such thing as Spirit baptism today. They erroneously identify baptism into the Body with Pentecostal baptism, and since they have not witnessed any genuine demonstrations of the Spirit's working today as He did at Pentecost, and since they know that Paul clearly states that there is just one baptism for today, they deduce that Spirit baptism took place only once and then passed away, leaving only water baptism as the one baptism for today. If, however, it can be proved -- as I believe it has been -- that baptism into the Body is different from the baptism with power at Pentecost, then this Baptist position is proven false, and just the opposite deduction must be drawn concerning the one baptism for today.

It remains to be pointed out that Cornelius in Acts 10 received the same baptism as the apostles did at Pentecost. This baptism, therefore, was not into the Body of Christ. It would appear, therefore, that there is no indication from the Scripture of the beginning of the unprophesied Body of Christ until we come to the ministry of the apostle Paul.

An endeavor has been made by some who clearly recognize the

difference between Spirit baptism into the Body and Spirit baptism with power, to teach that members of the Body of Christ receive both of these baptisms. In such a case, Spirit baptism with power is made equivalent to receiving the Holy Spirit. (For further discussion of this view see *Systematic Theology*, L. S. Chafer, Vol. VI, pp. 138-161). This view, however, does not agree with the facts of the Scripture, for [John 20:22](#) plainly states that some time before Pentecost Christ breathed on the apostles and said, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." But they did not receive His baptism until Pentecost.

Therefore, this baptism is something more than receiving the Holy Spirit. Likewise, since these are two separate and distinct works of spiritual baptism, and once Paul makes it plain that there is but *one* baptism for members of the Body ([Eph. 4:5](#)), it would be contradictory to claim that both of these baptisms are for us today.

### **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER**

1. In the references to Holy Spirit baptism in the Gospels and in Acts, who is the baptizer?
2. In 1 Corinthians 12:13, who is the baptizer?
3. What fact about the Persons of the Trinity would make it extremely unlikely that Christ would be the baptizer in 1 Corinthians 12:13?
4. What differences were there between the Pentecostal Spirit baptism and that of 1 Corinthians 12:13 as far as Jews and Gentiles were concerned?
5. Were either of the two Spirit baptisms mentioned above related to Old Testament prophecy, and if so, which? What conclusions do you draw from this fact?
6. Were either of these baptisms experienced by the senses; that is, were they experiential? And if so, how were they experienced?
7. Would you link the Holy Spirit baptism received by Cornelius in Acts 10 with the one in Acts 1:4,5 or with the one in 1 Corinthians 12:13? Why?
8. What fact stated in John 20:22 would prove that the Pentecostal Spirit baptism was not merely the receiving or the impartation of the Holy Spirit?
9. Which fact stated in Ephesians 4 would disprove the claim that believers today receive both of these Spirit baptisms?



10. Which two of these expressions would you say are the most accurate according to the Scripture?

"baptism of the Holy Spirit,"

"baptism by the Holy Spirit,"

"baptism with the Holy Spirit."

To which passages would you refer each one?

## CHAPTER 3

### THE HOLY SPIRIT BAPTIZING INTO THE BODY OF CHRIST

Thus far we have considered only those Scriptures which definitely mention the Holy Spirit in relation to baptism. There are, of course, other references to the Spirit's baptism when His name is not mentioned. Since the Spirit's work of baptizing believers into the Body of Christ is a truth unique to the Pauline revelation, as we have already discovered, it will be our premise here that any other reference in Paul's epistles to baptism which clearly is not ritual baptism and which is not otherwise qualified must be this baptism into Christ, and not the Pentecostal baptism with power. And it may be stated at the outset that the only reference to ritual baptism in Paul's epistles is in [I Corinthians 1:13-17](#), where Paul explicitly states that Christ had not commissioned him to practice water baptism. Israel's baptism unto Moses ([I Cor. 10:2](#)) is neither ritual nor Spirit, but rather figurative, as is also the baptism for the dead in I Corinthians 15:29. We may safely conclude that all other references to baptism in Paul's epistles are to some phase of the Spirit's work in identifying believers with Christ as members of His body. In all, the word baptize or baptism is used by Paul in this connection just six times in four different passages which will now be carefully considered.

#### **Romans 6:3,4**

These verses answer the apostle's question in verse 2: "How shall we that are dead to sin, live any longer therein.?" The answer is:

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.

This passage plainly states that as many as were baptized into Christ were baptized into His death. If this refers to water baptism, then it is self-evident that water baptism places us into Christ, and also that every one who has thus been baptized into Christ has been baptized into His death. Such a view might be acceptable to the extreme ritualist, but it says entirely too much for any enlightened Protestant. If this is ritual baptism, then it is baptismal regeneration, pure and simple. All saved persons must be in Christ, and it is baptism which puts them into Him. Therefore, no unbaptized person could be in Christ. That Paul could not mean water baptism is self-evident, for Christ sent Paul not to baptize, but he surely sent him to save people ([I Cor. 9:22](#); [10:33](#)). Not only so, but Paul never mentions baptism as one of the conditions of salvation. Instead, he makes it clear that salvation is by grace through faith, and not by any works of

righteousness which we have done ([Eph. 2:8,9](#); [Tit. 3:5](#)).

This baptism makes one a sharer in Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. We were baptized into *His* death. We were buried with Him also through this baptism into His death. And we were raised up *with* Him to walk in newness of life. It is pertinent to ask, When was he put to death? Where was He buried? And how was He raised up! Paul claims that every believer was a joint-sharer in these experiences of Christ. If we died *with* Christ, we must have died *when* He died. If we were buried *with* Christ, we must have been buried *where* He was buried. If we were raised *with* Christ, we must have been raised in the *same manner* He was raised.

No ritual performed today could ever meet any one of these three requirements. Christ was crucified 1900 years ago; He was buried in Joseph's tomb; He was raised by the glory of the Father. These things happened only once to Christ, and it should be self-evident that only the divine working of God's Spirit could make real to the believer today the whole history of the Savior's passion. Paul could say, "I was crucified with Christ." So can we, because having been baptized into Christ by the Holy Spirit we are a part of Him, a member of His body, and therefore His death was our death, His burial our burial, and His resurrection our resurrection. What a far cry this is from external rituals, which at the best could be only types and shadows of a reality. We have the reality; therefore this is REAL baptism.

Note that this passage does not say we are buried in water -- a thought entirely foreign to scriptural terminology. Christ was buried, not in water, but in a rock-hewn sepulchre. Dipping a person in water, or applying water to the person is the scriptural picture of cleansing, but surely not of burial. Notice also that it is not said that baptism is a burial. We were buried with Him *through* (Greek *dia* with the genitive) baptism into death. Baptism is the instrument or agent through which we were entombed with Christ.

Notice what some outstanding theologians have to say about this passage.

**Dr. Godbey:**

God forbid that we should run into papistical dogmas of baptismal regeneration by giving a materialistic interpretation of this passage. It does not say: "baptized into water," but: "into Jesus Christ."

**Dr. Shedd:**

This word [buried], contrary to the opinion of many commentators, has no reference to the rite of baptism, because the burial spoken of is not in water, but in a sepulchre. The word means burn, inurn, enter, entomb.

Burial and baptism are totally diverse ideas and have nothing in common.

**W.G. Williams:**

The words, "buried with Him," or more exactly, put in the grave with Him, are not figurative, but literal, and mean that we were laid in the literal tomb of the Arimathean with the dead body of Jesus (though, of course, only constructively, i.e., imputatively, mystically, representatively). To press the mode of baptism from these words and to find proof of immersion in this passage, and in the parallel passage in Colossians 2:8-10, shows ignorance of the Greek and of the logical connection of the passage. Such an exegesis misses the point of the passage.

**Kenneth Wuest:**

Thus this baptism accomplished two things. It resulted in the power of sin being broken and the divine nature being implanted, which operation took place at the moment the believer placed his faith in the Lord Jesus...Therefore, the baptism referred to here is not water baptism, but the baptism by means of the Holy Spirit ([I Cor. 12:13](#)).

**Dr. L.S. Chafer:**

No ordinance is intimated by these expressions, nor is there any obligation being imposed that justifies an attempt to enact what is here set forth. This passage, with that which follows in the context, presents the central statement respecting the basis of the Christian's victory in daily life over the sin nature. This is its objective and meaning. To discover in it only the outward form of ritual ordinance, as many have done, is to surrender one of the most priceless assets in the whole field of Christian doctrine and by so much (for many) to abandon the hope of any life well-pleasing to God; for if this context means the one thing it cannot mean the other.

**Dr. Merrill F. Unger** (quoted by Dr. Chafer):

Water baptism is not in view at all in [Romans 6:3, 4](#); [Galatians 3:27](#); [Ephesians 4:5](#); [Colossians 2:12](#), and to read it into these passages is to becloud the truth, and to increase confusion.

It will be helpful at this point to notice that Christ spoke of His own death as a baptism:

But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished ([Luke 12:50](#)).

This is, in a sense, a further distinctive use of the word baptism, referring

neither to ritual nor to the work of the Holy Spirit. He was baptized into death upon the cross, and His death baptism becomes ours when the Holy Spirit baptizes us into Him.

The meaning, then, of this very important passage is that every believer in Jesus Christ was, at the moment of believing, baptized by God's Spirit into Christ. This placing into Christ so completely identifies the believer with Christ that it can now be said that Christ's death was his death, Christ's burial was his burial, Christ's resurrection was his resurrection. The believer, in the Person of Christ, has already died unto sin and the body of sin has been buried. If this be true, how shall this one who died unto sin live any longer therein.'? He is instead called upon to reckon himself dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God. God never asks one to reckon something to be true that is not true. It is true of every believer that he was really with Christ in his death, burial and resurrection through the baptizing work of the Spirit. This, then, is the divine basis for a godly, Spirit-guided life. To read a powerless ritual into this context is to make of none effect this marvelous divine provision. The believer's "old man" was buried, not in a tank of water to come back out of the water, but in an eternal sepulcher, to be put away forever. This is as real a thing as God could do, and it is accomplished through a real baptism.

### **Colossians 2:11, 12**

In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Everything that has been said about Romans 6:3, 4 can also be said of this passage, which is very similar. Two things should be noted:

First, Christ was circumcised twice, once ritually at eight days old, when part of the flesh was cut off, and again at the Cross, when the flesh was completely cut off in death. He was also baptized twice: once by John in ritual baptism and again at the Cross in death baptism. The second circumcision and the second baptism were made *without hands*. It was entirely the operation of God.

Second, buried with Him in baptism cannot mean in water baptism rather buried with Him in His death baptism, as is stated in Romans 6. If this passage is studied honestly in its context it will surely be seen that no doing of man in his most religious acts could ever accomplish this stupendous fact of making a poor lost sinner to become *complete in Christ*, and yet this is exactly what this baptism by God's Spirit accomplishes (v. 10).

### **Galatians 3:27**

For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Notice that this baptism, as in the former passages, is *into Christ*. It has been established that only God's Spirit can put a sinner into Christ.

All such have put on Christ. Surely not all ceremonially baptized people have put on Christ. And it is equally true that all true believers in Christ have put on Christ whether they have had ritual baptism or not. Therefore any one who will admit the possibility of a soul being saved apart from water baptism must also admit that this passage cannot be speaking of water baptism, for such a saved person is in Christ and has put on Christ without being baptized in water, yet he has been baptized into Christ. This, then, is another case of real baptism.

### **Ephesians 4:5**

One Lord, one faith, one baptism.

This is the final passage on real baptism in Paul's epistles. It is given as one of the seven great unifying realities in the Church. It is indeed the very working of God which makes us one with Christ. There are various ritual baptisms in the Scriptures, but only one baptism that makes us members of the Body. This baptism is Paul's great theme, and surely if there is any place where Paul refers to real baptism it is here.

We close this part of our study with borrowed words from Merrill F. Unger in *The Baptism with the Holy Spirit*:

With these various truths given their proper emphasis, the doctrine of the baptism with the Holy Spirit is at once lifted out of the haze and fog of error that have so obscured it, and, in its majestic purity and grand simplicity, becomes one of the most precious and vital factors in Christian unity. No wonder the great Apostle cries out for the "one baptism" as one of the indispensable sevenfold unities to be kept in realizing the "unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Eph. 4:3-6). Who can begin to imagine the mighty transformation that would take place in poor, distraught, divided Christendom, if suddenly all the confusion and obscurity were torn away, and the full blaze and full-robed glory of the truth of every Christian's oneness in Christ by the baptizing work of the Spirit burst upon the consciousness of all God's people? Blessing, revival, fellowship, and power such as the Church has never experienced, perhaps since the apostolic days, would be the inevitable result. Is it to be thought of, then, as amazing that this vital doctrine should always have been the special target of the most subtle Satanic assaults? That this is the case now should inspire to intrepid boldness and uncompromising fidelity in its proclamation and defense, in view of the sublime glory of the imperishable

truth it represents. (Quoted in *Systematic Theology*, L. S. Chafer, Vol. VI, p. 161).

### **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER**

1. What is the only passage in Paul's epistles where water baptism is definitely referred to?
2. According to I Corinthians 12:13, how is the believer put into Christ? By what baptism, therefore, are those in Romans 6:3 baptized into Christ? Are any in Christ today who have not been baptized into Him? If it be claimed that this is water baptism, what power must be predicated of the water?
3. How many of those baptized into Christ have been baptized into His death? Did the death, burial and resurrection of Romans 6:3,4 take place when Christ died, or does it refer to the time individual believers are baptized ceremonially? What preposition in these verses shows that the believer's death, burial and raising up took place at the same time of Christ's passion?
4. Does this passage say we are buried in water? Does the Scripture ever refer to the burial of the dead in the element of water? Where was Christ buried? If the believer was buried with Christ, where must the believer have been buried?
5. What was the baptism which Christ referred to in Luke 12:50? When does this baptism which He experienced become ours?
6. Upon what basis can God appeal to the believer to reckon himself to be dead indeed unto sin? Has every one who has been baptized in water been crucified or put to death with Christ? Has every one who has been baptized by the Spirit into Christ been crucified with Christ?
7. What expression in Colossians 2:11,12 clearly indicates that both the baptism and the circumcision of the believer are spiritual in nature?
8. According to Galatians 3:27, how many people have put on Christ? Has a believer who has not been ceremonially baptized put on Christ? What kind of baptism, then, must this verse refer to?
9. How many baptisms are there, according to Ephesians 4:5? Does this refer to the number of baptisms contained in the entire Bible, or does it refer only to the number of baptisms which belong to members of the Body of Christ?

10. To what is Paul appealing in Ephesians 4:3? Has water baptism produced this result in the history of the Church? Are the other six unities referred to in verse 4-6 spiritual or physical? What would this fact lead you to believe about the nature of the one baptism? Why could not the believer today scripturally have both ritual and real baptism?



## CHAPTER 4

### FIGURATIVE BAPTISMS

All of the passages where the Holy Spirit is specifically mentioned as engaged in a baptizing work, and all of the passages referring to Spirit baptism where the Spirit is not actually named have been considered in the first three chapters of this series. It remains for us in this chapter to deal with all of those Scriptures which use baptism in a figurative sense. This usage we must distinguish from both real, or Spirit baptism and ritual, or water baptism.

#### Death Baptism

There are three places in the Gospels where Christ refers to His impending death as a baptism, Matthew 20:22,23, Mark 10:38,39, and Luke 12:50. When the mother of James and John sought a special place of favor for her sons in the Kingdom, Jesus answered:

Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?...Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with...

Mark relates this same incident in almost the same words. All, as far as I know, are agreed that Christ was here speaking about His sufferings and death, and the fact that these disciples would also have to suffer in like manner.

Luke refers to still another incident where without doubt Christ called His death a baptism:

I am come to send fire on the earth; and what will I, if it be already kindled? But I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened till it be accomplished! Suppose ye that I am come to give peace on earth? I tell you, Nay; but rather division.

Christ had two baptisms, one by John with water at the Jordan, and the other with death at Calvary. Christ avowedly came to give peace on earth, for that was the glad tidings of the angels at His birth, but in view of His rejection by His own people Israel, there could be no peace on earth. Hence in this veiled fashion, Christ announces His impending death, and the judgment of fire which He would send upon a Christ-rejecting world. This judgment of fire leads us to consider a further usage of the word baptism.

#### THE BAPTISM OF FIRE

John had preached concerning Christ:

He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost and with fire ([Matt. 3:11](#); [Luke 3:16](#)).

The immediate context -- "the chaff he will burn with fire unquenchable" -- proves that this baptism with fire is a judgment and has no reference to the "cloven tongues as of fire" which appeared at Pentecost. John had foretold this baptism with fire, and Christ in [Luke 12:49,50](#) makes it plain that before it takes place, He Himself must be baptized in death. There are many references to this fire baptism in Scripture. One of the most familiar is 2 Thessalonians 1:7,8:

...the Lord Jesus shall be revealed from heaven with his mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on them that know not God, and that obey not the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.

### **ANTITYPE BAPTISM**

For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: by which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison which sometime were disobedient, when once the long-suffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by [through] water. The like figure whereunto even baptism [literally, antitype baptism] doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), by the resurrection of Jesus Christ... (1 Peter 3: 18-21).

Peter is here making Noah's salvation in the ark to be a type of salvation now in Christ. He plainly states that there is a baptism which now saves us, but he distinctly states it is not a putting away of the filth of the flesh (which is surely included in the work of ceremonial baptism). He could not, therefore, be talking about water baptism. He says this saving baptism is the antitype of Noah's experience of being brought safely through the judgment waters of the flood. The ark is doubtless a type of Christ. The flood waters are doubtless a type of judgment for sins which fell upon the Lord Jesus Christ when He died on the Cross. As the Psalmist has it:

All thy waves and thy billows are gone over me (Ps. 42:7).

Noah and his family were saved by being in the ark. We are saved by being in Him who endured the judgment for us. The context plainly shows it is Christ 's death and resurrection that saves us, and not a water ceremony. Peter had been taught by Christ Himself that His death was a baptism, and here he tells us that we are saved now through Christ 's death baptism, which was the

antitype of the ark's baptism in the flood.

Although Peter was commissioned to practice water baptism for the remission of sins ([Acts 2:38](#)), it could not be said that that baptism saved people. It was at that time a necessary accompaniment to salvation, even as circumcision was to Abraham, but when Peter wrote his epistle he surely made it plain that salvation was through the death and resurrection of Christ and not through a ceremony. Also, it is very inconsistent to suppose that water in the old dispensation is a type of water in the new. The literal and physical things of the old were types of the spiritual realities in Christ, or as Paul put it:

Which are a shadow of things to come, but the body is of Christ (Col. 2:17).

Therefore 'the antitype baptism which saves now is not ritual baptism, but is just another name for the work of Christ in His vicarious death.

It is important at this point to see that Paul in Romans 6 takes up where Peter leaves off, and shows that this death baptism of Christ has become our death baptism by our identification with Christ through being baptized by the Spirit into Christ.

As many of us as were baptized in Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.

Not only did He die for us, but we died with Him.

## **BAPTISM FOR THE DEAD**

Else what shall they do which are baptized for the dead, if the dead rise not at all? why are they then baptized for the dead? (I Cor. 15:29).

This is admittedly an obscure text. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, states:

Concerning this expression, of which some thirty different explanations are given, it is best to admit frankly that we lack the facts for a decisive interpretation. None of the explanations proposed are free from objection.

Although many commentators try to explain this as referring to the practice of a living person being baptized for an unbaptized dead person, it would seem absolutely impossible for one who is familiar with the Pauline revelation of the grace of God to suppose that Paul, who had not been commissioned to baptize in the first place, should here be advocating a practice which is even foreign to the Scripture, and surely foreign to the gospel which he preached.

The weight of evidence from the context seems to uphold the explanation as given by Godet and others which refers baptism to martyrdom -- the baptism of blood, or as we have referred to it above -- death baptism. Paul uses other figurative language in the context. His "dying daily" and "fighting with wild beasts at Ephesus" must be understood figuratively, and so also "being baptized for the dead." Paul and many others were daily exposing themselves to suffering and death in preaching the gospel. They were undergoing a baptism of suffering, but if there were no resurrection of the dead, why should they expose themselves to death; why should they then be baptized (in this figurative-sense) on behalf of them?

### **BAPTISM INTO MOSES**

There remains one further figurative use of the word, found in I Corinthians 10:2:

And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

The reference, of course, is to the children of Israel when they crossed the Red Sea on dry land without getting wet. The Egyptians who pursued after them, trying to do the same thing, were quite literally immersed in the water, but they were not baptized.

The expression, "were all baptized unto Moses," uses the same preposition as found in [Romans 6:3,4](#); [I Corinthians 12:13](#); [Galatians 3:27](#), where it is translated more accurately, "into." There is a definite parallel between Israel being baptized into Moses, and believers today being baptized into Christ, or into the Body of Christ. There is this difference, however, that there was no organic union effected between the Israelites and Moses as there is between believers and Christ. Israel was brought into a national unity with Moses as their head through this baptism.

Thus far we have dealt with thirty occurrences of the words baptize and baptism which have absolutely no reference to a ritual. They include:

- ◆ Christ baptizing with the Holy Spirit at Pentecost.
- ◆ Christ at His second coming baptizing with fire.
- ◆ Christ's death baptism.
- ◆ The One Baptism which includes these various phases: the believer being baptized by one Spirit into one Body, being baptized into Christ, and being baptized into His death.
- ◆ The disciples' and martyrs' baptism of suffering and death.
- ◆ Israel's baptism into Moses.

It will thus be seen that there is much more to the subject of baptism than most Christians imagine. To the great majority in Christendom, baptism means

just one thing -- a ritual -- but there the unity ceases and the confusion begins. The dozens of interpretations of that ritual have caused most of the schisms in the church, and the trouble has been due largely to a failure to distinguish these various scriptural baptisms and to the supposition that these and other expressions, such as: "the washing of regeneration" (Tit. 3:5), all refer to ceremonial water baptism.

It remains for us to consider in the chapters to follow all of the occurrences of ritual baptism in the Bible, with some necessary comments on the mode, the meaning of the word baptism as discovered from all of its uses in the Bible, and finally, why Paul, who was not commissioned to baptize, did in fact baptize some.

### **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER**

1. Would water baptism be a literal or a figurative use of the word baptism? While Spirit baptism is a figurative use of the word, why must we distinguish it from the various other figurative usages mentioned in this lesson?
2. Thayer's Greek Lexicon gives as one of the metaphorical usages of *baptizo*, "to be overwhelmed with calamities." Which of the figurative uses mentioned in this lesson would be described by this definition?
3. What were the two baptisms which Christ received?
4. Did any one besides Christ ever literally receive a death baptism? Who, for example? While no *living* believer today has experienced a literal death baptism, else he would not be living, has any received a death baptism, and if so, how did he receive it? And whose death baptism was it, his or another's?
5. While some claim that the cloven tongues of fire at Pentecost was the Baptism of Fire, what proves definitely that it was not?
6. Does Peter state that baptism now saves us? Was Peter right? Does baptism save us today? What baptism was Peter talking about, water or something else?
7. What statement in the context of 1 Peter 3:18-21 definitely shows that Peter is not talking about ceremonial baptism? Was, however, water baptism a necessary accompaniment to receiving salvation under Peter's ministry at Pentecost? What verse in Acts proves this?
8. In what way are Noah 's ark and Christ related as type and antitype?
9. What things in the teachings of Paul and in the immediate context

indicate that Paul was using baptism figuratively in I Corinthians 15:29? Why would it be unsafe to try to build a doctrine upon this verse?

10. What happened to the children of Israel according to I Corinthians 10:2, when they passed through the Red Sea? What is the parallel between Moses and Israel, and between Christ and the Church? What great difference exists between Moses' relation to Israel and Christ's relation to the Church?

## CHAPTER 5

### THE DIVERS BAPTISMS OF THE LAW

Hebrews 9:10 states that the Mosaic covenant with its ordinances of divine service and its earthly sanctuary had its standing only in meats and drinks and divers washings, or baptisms, all being carnal ordinances imposed until the time of reformation. Thus the word, *baptismos*, is used to describe all of the purification ceremonies of the Levitical law. None of these was an immersion, but rather washings and sprinklings. Exodus 30:17-21 tells of the laver and its foot for the daily washing of the hands and feet of the priests as they ministered in the tabernacle. There are over twenty references in Leviticus to the divers washings or baptisms. Many suppose that baptism is a New Testament innovation, since the word is not found in the English Old Testament, but the word baptism is a Greek word and the Old Testament was written in Hebrew. The Jews practiced many different baptisms for 1500 years before the New Testament began. They were not puzzled by John's baptism, as though he had invented a new ceremony, but rather asked:

Why baptizest thou then, if thou be not that Christ, nor Elias, neither that prophet? (John 1:25).

#### THE TRADITIONAL JEWISH BAPTISMS

Besides the many God-given baptisms in the Old Testament Levitical religion, the Jews added their own manmade baptisms to their religion. In [Mark 7:1-9](#) Christ enumerated some of these baptisms, and denounced them as traditions of the elders which made void the commandment of God. The verb *baptizo* is used once and the noun *baptismos* is used twice in this passage, both being translated by the word "wash." The Lord used another word as a synonym of baptism in verse 3, the same word used for the washing of feet in John 13, *nipito*, and its negative form, *anipitos*, or unwashen, in verses 2 and 5.

And when they saw some of his disciples eat bread with defiled, that is to say, with unwashen (*anipitos*) hands, they found fault. For the Pharisees, and all the Jews, except they wash (*nipito*) their hands off, eat not, holding the tradition of the elders. And when they come from the market, except they wash (*baptizo*), they eat not. And many other things there be, which they have received to hold, as the washing (*baptismos*) of cups, and pots, brazen vessels, and of tables. Then the Pharisees and scribes asked him, Why walk not thy disciples according to the tradition of the elders, but eat bread with unwashen (*anipitos*) hands? He answered and said unto them, Well hath Esaias prophesied of you hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoureth me with their lips, but their heart is far from me. Howbeit in vain do they worship me, teaching for doctrines the commandments of men.

For laying aside the commandment of God, ye hold the tradition of men, as the washing (*baptismos*) of pots and cups; and many other such like things ye do.

This passage reveals several important and interesting things about baptism. First, the word surely does not mean a burial or an immersion. The Jews did not bury or completely submerge in water their tables, or more literally, their couches upon which they reclined at meals. They merely sprinkled water upon them to ceremonially cleanse them. Next, it is evident that the Lord used the word baptism as a synonym of washing. And finally, it is made plain that these man-made baptisms made void the commandment of God. There are numerous man-made ceremonies being practiced in Christendom today, and do not these modern traditions of the elders also make void the commandment of God? Most people have an idea that it matters little what practices are followed, just so people get baptized one way or another or for one of a dozen different reasons. If they could only see that to practice a baptism which God has not commanded is in effect to make void the commandment of God! (See also Luke 11:38, where "washed" is also *baptizo*.)

### **JOHN'S BAPTISM FOR REMISSION OF SINS**

The words, *baptizo* and *baptisma* are used some forty-four times in references to John's baptism. For those who are interested in making a thorough study, there follows a complete concordance of these references: Matthew 3:6,7,11,13,14, 16; 21:25, Mark 1:4,4,5,8,9; 11:30; Luke 3:3,7,12,16,21; 7:29,30; 20:4; John 1:25,26,28,31,33; 3:22,23; 10:40; Acts 1:5,22; 10:37; 11:16; 13:24; 18:25; 19:3,4. There are also three references to the baptism which the disciples of Christ practiced at the same time, which evidently was of the same nature as John's baptism ([John 3:26](#); [4:1,2](#)).

The full descriptive title of John's baptism is found in [Luke 3:3](#): "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." Repentance is in the genitive, the whence-case, the case of proceeding from or out of. It is the baptism which proceeded from repentance on the part of the children of Israel, and it was practiced for the remission of sins.

John explained the purpose of his baptism in John 1:31:

And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

No one today could practice baptism for such a purpose.

To understand John's baptism it is necessary to consider the fact that Israel was God's covenant people. They were the children of the covenant and of the promises ([Acts 3:25](#)). The Gentiles at this time were aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise ([Eph.](#)



2:12). John's ministry was one of calling this people of God unto repentance, for they had departed far from the Lord, in order that he might introduce their Messiah unto them. This ministry took place under the Dispensation of the Law. John's baptism for the forgiveness of sins was similar to the divers baptisms of the Law which also were for the forgiveness of sins.

It is interesting to read in Luke 7:29,30:

And all the people that heard him, and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John, but the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

At that time it was absolutely essential for an Israelite to be baptized, otherwise he would be rejecting the counsel of God. By being baptized he justified God -- he declared that God was right both in judging him as a sinner and in providing the appointed means of forgiveness, namely, baptism.

There is surely nothing in John's practice of baptism to bolster the Baptist notion of baptism meaning burial. As yet the truth of Christ's coming death and burial was unknown. As late as Luke 18:34, no one knew or understood that Christ was to die and to rise again. But the people surely knew what John's baptism signified.

### **CHRIST'S BAPTISM IN WATER BY JOHN TO FULFILL ALL RIGHTEOUSNESS**

A very common argument used today for being baptized is that we should follow Christ in baptism. The argument says that He was baptized to show us that we ought to be baptized. However, when we read Christ's own words and the reason He gave for being baptized, we see the absolute impossibility of any other person ever following the Lord in what He there did. When Christ presented Himself to John for baptism, John said, "I have need to be baptized of thee," and he forbade Jesus ([Matt. 3:14](#)). But Jesus answered:

Suffer it to be so now; for thus it becometh us *to fulfill all righteousness*.

This was a unique baptism, for Jesus was a unique person. Surely John was right in wanting to forbid Jesus from being baptized, for baptism was for sinners. But the Lord Jesus was here beginning His ministry to Israel, and this was His official step in identifying Himself with sinful humanity. This identity continued throughout His earthly ministry and culminated in His vicarious death. With all of the stupendous issues involved, think of the shallowness of the reasoning of one who talks about following Christ in baptism. If we were all sinless Christs who had come into the world to save sinners, then we might be able to do such a thing. We might as well ask people to follow Christ by dying for the sins of the world.

## QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER

1. Were the Jewish people familiar with the practice of baptism before John came baptizing? Give Scripture to prove that baptism was not an innovation.
2. What Scripture definitely states that the Old Covenant contained divers baptisms? Were these baptisms immersions? What was the apparent significance of these various baptisms? (The translation of *baptismos* in this passage in the King James version gives the answer).
3. What were some of the things the Jews traditionally baptized before eating? What indicates the unlikelihood of immersion being practiced on these objects? Did they baptize these things to bury them or to cleanse them?
4. Do you think the majority of the Jews were sincere in practicing these baptisms? Did sincerity make the practice right? Do you think there is the possibility of Christians today making void the commands of God by practicing baptism based upon traditionalism?
5. Did those who refused to submit to John's baptism get forgiveness of sin? Would one have been forgiven if he repented but refused to be baptized, or would he necessarily have submitted to baptism if he truly repented?
6. If John's baptism was for the remission of sins, how can we reconcile this with Hebrews 9:22? Were there any other water ceremonies given to the Jews for cleansing from sin?
7. Do you think John would have carried the same message of repentance and baptism to the Gentiles? Was there any difference between the relationship of Jews and Gentiles to God at that time?
8. In reference to the ministry of the Messiah, why did John say he had come baptizing? Would this be a legitimate reason for baptizing people today?
9. Why did Jesus Christ submit to John's baptism?
10. Why would it be impossible for any one to follow Christ in baptism?

## CHAPTER 6

### PENTECOSTAL WATER BAPTISM

This particular biblical baptism is that which was commanded by Christ in His kingdom commission to the Twelve Apostles, and which they began practicing on the day of Pentecost. The commissions are found in [Matthew 28:19](#) and [Mark 16:16](#). The practice of the ceremony is stated in [Acts 2:38,41; 8:12,13,16,36,38; 9:18; 10:47,48; and 22:16](#). Ceremonial baptism is also mentioned eight times in connection with Paul's ministry, but these will be considered under a separate heading.

This baptism which was practiced at Pentecost is almost universally called Christian baptism. It is said to be the last command of Christ to the church and therefore binding upon all Christians until the end of the age. It is variously interpreted. By the more ceremonial denominations it is taken in its literal sense, and is considered to be essential for the forgiveness of sins. By the more evangelical denominations it is considered to be a sort of testimony or witness to salvation which should be practiced by all Christians, but which is not at all essential to salvation.

This difference of interpretation is due to the difference between Peter's and Paul's ministries, and the failure to distinguish this difference. Peter's message at Pentecost makes baptism to be necessary. Paul's message makes it plain that salvation is by grace apart from all religious works of righteousness. The ceremonialist, supposing that Peter and Paul preached the same message, reasons that we are to take Peter literally, and that Paul must be interpreted in the light of Peter's preaching, so that being saved apart from works of righteousness does not mean salvation apart from water baptism. The evangelical, on the other hand, also seeing no difference between Peter's and Paul's gospels, reasons that we must take Paul's statements literally and interpret the Gospel commissions and Peter's preaching in the light of Paul's Epistles. If all such were only obedient to God's command to rightly divide the Word of truth, they would recognize that Peter and Paul were given two distinctive ministries, and therefore we can take both Peter and Paul literally. Water baptism was essential under Peter's ministry. Under Paul's ministry, it was not only not necessary, but it was not even a part of the distinctive revelation of the gospel of the grace of God.

#### THE COMMISSIONS

Let us notice first the commissions themselves. The sentimental argument is that these were the very last words of our Lord to His church. Consequently, just as we bend over the dying form of a loved one and strain to hear his last words and requests, and then to carry them out religiously, so we ought to carry

out our Lord's last request and submit to water baptism. Unconsciously, perhaps, but none the less realistically, this argument denies the inspiration of the Pauline epistles, for it claims that the last words spoken by Christ are to be found in the four Gospels and in the first chapter of Acts. Paul claims that Christ appeared to him from heaven and spoke to him by revelation those things that are found in his epistles. "Since ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me" (2 Cor. 13:3) is Paul's rebuttal to this sentimental argument. If we are to believe Paul, Christ's last words on earth are not only not His last words to the Church of this dispensation, but they are not His words to the Body of Christ at all. Note carefully that Paul claims Christ first made known through him the truth of the Body and its existence, and therefore also the instructions for the members of the Body. Christ's last words on earth were spoken to His Kingdom subjects and are just as important to them as His words through Paul are for us.

It is impossible to reconcile "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mk. 16:16), with Paul's teaching. The Baptists try to make it mean, "he that believeth and is saved should be baptized," but this is just not what Christ said:

Repent and be baptized every one of you for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).

This surely does not say you should be baptized to witness to the fact that you have received the Holy Spirit, and it surely doesn't contain even the remotest implication about being buried with Christ. One of the weakest arguments of some great men of God who knew much of the grace of God is their insistence that both of the above Scriptures must refer to Holy Spirit baptism, because we know from Paul that salvation is only by the death of Christ. Imagine Peter saying, "be baptized every one of you with the Holy Spirit and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Or doesn't the inconsistency of such language register?

Some find it impossible to believe that after the death, burial and resurrection of Christ any requirement for salvation apart from faith in the finished work of Christ could be imposed. Therefore they cannot believe that Christ meant that only those who both believed and were baptized should be saved. They cannot believe the gift of the Holy Spirit was conditioned at Pentecost upon first being baptized in water for the remission of sins. They can understand how that in Old Testament days and even under John's baptism a ceremony was necessary and even instrumental in the forgiveness of sins, but after Christ's death for sin, all such practices must be ruled out.

Of course, all such are faced with the unequivocal statements of Scripture that water baptism was necessary for the forgiveness of sins. In fact, the identical terminology is applied to baptism at Pentecost and to John's baptism, "for the remission of sins." We would ask those who are thus troubled to inject themselves into that scene at Pentecost and to forget for the time being the

revelation of the meaning of Christ's death as it is given in Paul's epistles. Would you then hear Peter saying:

There is no difference between the Jew and the Gentile...we are not under law, but under grace...God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ...let no man judge you in meat, or drink, or in respect of an holy day, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days...if I yet preach circumcision, then is the offense of the cross ceased [Peter's gospel is designated as the gospel of circumcision]...but now the righteousness of God apart from the law is manifested... by grace are ye saved through faith, not of works lest any man should boast?

Of course not, for none of these things had yet been revealed. You would indeed hear Peter preaching about the death of Christ, but instead of being good news in which they were to glory, it was bad news which made them guilty before God of the murder of God's Son. Repentance and baptism for the forgiveness of sins had special reference to that great crime of which the nation of Israel was guilty. It was no longer a question merely of forgiveness of the multitude of seemingly trivial sins; it was now a question of a complete change of mind about a Man they had put to death, and an identification of themselves with Him through baptism recognizing Him as their Messiah and King. Only such action on their part would result in forgiveness and make them fit to be recipients of the Holy Spirit. It was not until after the nation of Israel had rejected this baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, even as they rejected John's baptism, that God turned from Israel and revealed the gospel of His grace for the nations or Gentiles in this present dispensation.

### **IMPORTANT PRINCIPLE**

There is a very important principle involved in all of God's dealings in salvation. It is this: all forgiveness and all that is involved in defeating the Devil is by virtue of the Cross, but it does not all take place historically at the time of the Cross. Christ destroyed the Devil by His own death, according to Hebrews 2:14, but historically the Devil has not been destroyed to this day. Another important principle in salvation is that all salvation has been by faith. In the various dispensations God required that faith be manifested in different ways. Once faith was manifested by bringing an animal sacrifice. At another time it involved the practice of all that was contained in the Levitical law. At another time it showed itself in submitting to water baptism. But for today God has revealed that salvation is by grace through faith alone, apart from all religious works. It is just as much the act of faith today to take God at His word and receive salvation apart from works as it was in past dispensations to take God at His word and to receive salvation in compliance with religious works. And we might say that it is a lack of faith, or a disobedience to faith, to endeavor to receive salvation today through baptism, when God has revealed that salvation is now apart from such practices.

## SUMMARY

In concluding this section of our treatment of baptism, we must consider three passages mentioned at the beginning: the first dealing with the baptism of the Samaritans; the second, with the baptism of Cornelius, and the third with the baptism of Saul.

In Acts 8, the important point is that Philip baptized the Samaritans when they believed his preaching, but not one of them received the Holy Spirit until Peter and John came from Jerusalem and laid hands on them. This shows conclusively that under that dispensation water baptism was not performed upon people who already had received the Holy Spirit, which is the modern Baptist doctrine. The delay in their receiving the Holy Spirit after being baptized can be explained upon the basis that Samaria, the ancient headquarters of the Ten Tribes which rebelled against Jerusalem under Jereboam, was to be brought back into union with Judah in the Kingdom (see [Ezekiel 37:15-24](#)), and that on this occasion Samaria was receiving its first official message of the Kingdom, which required that the apostles come down from Jerusalem and place their official approval upon this work of God.

In the case of Cornelius in [Acts 10:47-48](#), the Holy Spirit came upon him before he was baptized, and Peter hurriedly called for water in order to baptize him. This is not necessarily the beginning of a new order, as is suggested by a footnote in the Scofield Bible, but was a sovereign act of the Spirit of God apart from which Peter probably would not have baptized these Gentiles, as is evidenced by his complete surprise that God had granted this same gift to them. But there is doubtless here also a preparation for that new order which came under Paul's ministry, of receiving the Holy Spirit upon believing ([Acts 15:7-9](#)). It is important also to see that what Cornelius received is not what we today receive. He received the Person of the Holy Spirit, even as we do, but he also received the baptism of power which we discussed in the first chapter of this treatise and which caused him to speak with tongues.

The third passage deals with the baptism of Saul. The apostle Paul recounted in Acts 22:16 that when Christ appeared to him on the Damascus Road and saved him, He sent a certain Ananias to him, who said among other things:

And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

This passage is a hard pill for the Baptists, but it is pie for the ceremonialists. If we rightly divide the Word, it poses no problem at all. Paul was saved under the Pentecostal administration and Ananias told him just what he would have told any other Jew who turned to Jesus as the Christ. Baptism was a

washing away of sins, not a burial. Saul, the chief persecutor and blasphemer, must surely submit to that which was required at Pentecost, but it does not follow that Paul's subsequent ministry must continue along those lines. Indeed, God separated Paul unto his special Gentile ministry in Acts 13, and Paul makes it clear that in that ministry there was given to him no commission to practice water baptism.

### **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER**

1. Compare Acts 2:38 with Luke 3:3 and state the difference between John's baptism and that practiced at Pentecost.
2. Why did the Twelve baptize at Pentecost? Where would you find the command for them to do this? What two things are wrong with the statement that this was Christ's last command to the Church which is His Body?
3. According to Acts 2:38 and Mark 16:16, would you say baptism was necessary to salvation at that time? Would belief without baptism have been sufficient?
4. Why do some interpreters who believe in salvation by grace apart from works claim that the baptism in the two above passages is Spirit baptism?
5. Give reasons why these two passages could not possibly refer to Spirit baptism?
6. Did Peter put the emphasis on good news or on bad news when preaching the death of Christ to Israel at Pentecost? What was the particular sin concerning which Israel was called to repent?
7. What one thing has God required from man in all dispensations for salvation? Has He ever required anything else of man besides this? Does He require anything but faith in this dispensation in order to be saved? If Old Testament saints were saved by the death of Christ, why was it necessary for them to bring animal sacrifices?
8. What fact in Philip's baptism of the Samaritans contradicts the modern practice of demanding that one have the Holy Spirit before he is a candidate for baptism?
9. Why do you think God gave the Holy Spirit to Cornelius before he was baptized? Was the Spirit baptism which he received performed by Christ as the baptizer, or was the Spirit the baptizer?

10. Was Paul baptized in water as a burial with Christ (Acts 22:16)? Do you think Ananias was right in telling him what he did? Would he be right in telling people now to do the same thing?



## CHAPTER 7

### CONFLICTING INTERPRETATIONS ABOUT BAPTISM

Thus far in our treatment of baptism we have considered every passage in the New Testament where the word is used, with the exception of six verses which refer to Paul's practice of baptism. Before dealing with these six Pauline usages, and in order to gain clear factual information to help clear our minds from erroneous interpretations on the subject, we will next consider several commonly accepted beliefs concerning the meaning and purpose of water baptism.

#### BAPTISM AS A SEAL OF INFANT SALVATION

This is a popular position and is held by so-called "covenant theologians," which is the system of theology taught in many denominations today. Covenant theology is the teaching that the Church of this dispensation has taken the place of the Jewish nation as the children of God's covenant, and that we are therefore the true Israel of God. From this erroneous and unscriptural premise it is argued that just as circumcision was the seal of the covenant made with Abraham ([Rom. 4:11](#)), so baptism has taken the place of circumcision under the New Covenant and has become the seal of that covenant. Consequently, their teaching is that instead of circumcising babies today, as they did under the old dispensation, we should baptize them. Being baptized, these infants become the children of the covenant. Unbaptized infants are not children of the covenant, and therefore logically if they died in that state they would be lost. This is also the teaching of the Roman Catholic Church. Some Lutherans hold the same view, while others entertain the hope that unbaptized infants may be saved. Reformed theologians generally hold that while baptism of infants is necessary, they will be saved apart from it.

#### AUTHORITATIVE CREEDAL STATEMENTS

##### ROMAN CATHOLIC

For as no other means of salvation remains for infant children except baptism, it is easy to comprehend the enormity of the guilt which they lay themselves, who suffer them to be deprived of the grace of the sacrament longer than necessity requires (Cat. Conc. Trident., Pt. 2, Ch. 2, Ques. 33.)

##### LUTHERAN

The ninth article is approved in which we confess, that Baptism is necessary for salvation, and that children are to be baptized, and that the

baptism of children is not void, but necessary and efficacious to salvation (Apol. Aug. Conf., p. 156.)

## **REFORMED**

Sacraments are visible, sacred signs and seals appointed by God that in their use we may have the promise of the gospel made clearer and sealed; to wit, that God for the sake of the one oblation of Christ bestows on us forgiveness of sins and eternal life (Cat. Heidelb., Fr. 66.)

(The above quotations are taken from *Outlines of Theology*, A. A. Hodge, pp. 629, 601.)

## **ANSWER TO THIS ERROR**

There are several scriptural answers to this error of Covenant Theology. In the first place, the word "seal" is used some forty-two times in the New Testament, but never once does it refer to water baptism. In so important a matter as this it is impossible to believe that the apostles or Christ would have failed to even mention it.

Next, it is very evident that both circumcision and water baptism were practiced at the same time by the Twelve Apostles, and that in their practice, at least, one had not taken the place of the other. As late as [Acts 21:21](#), some thirty years after Pentecost, the Jerusalem apostles were still practicing circumcision. As a matter of fact, their gospel is called by Paul, "the gospel of the circumcision" ([Gal. 2:7](#)). If baptism had taken the place of circumcision, then Paul should have called it, "the gospel of baptism." One who knows something about the difference between Paul's gospel of the uncircumcision and the Twelve's gospel of the circumcision, both of which were divinely given, could never fall into this error of covenant theology.

Finally, the context of Romans 4, where circumcision is called a seal, proves the very opposite.

Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness. How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision but in uncircumcision. And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also (Rom. 4:9-12).

If baptism has the same function that circumcision used to have and has now taken its place, we should be able to substitute the word baptism and read:

"And he received the sign of baptism, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being unbaptized; that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not baptized." If it could be proved that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, then this passage would prove Gentiles should not be baptized and that Paul had a gospel which was designated as the gospel of the unbaptized. Of course, the passage does not teach this, but it does teach that just as Abraham was saved and made righteous by faith alone while he was yet uncircumcised, so also were the uncircumcised Gentiles under Paul's gospel being saved and made righteous by faith in Christ alone, apart from circumcision or baptism or any other religious ceremony.

### **RITUAL AND REAL CIRCUMCISION**

Just as there are the two kinds of baptism, so there are both ritual and real circumcision. The believer today receives both real baptism and real circumcision entirely apart from either ritual. If the ritual is a shadow of the real, as many declare to be true, then in laying aside the ritual that we might lay hold on the real, we have given up nothing but the shadows.

Because Paul contended so strenuously against the preaching or practicing of circumcision for the Gentiles under his gospel, it seems strange to hear him declare, "For we are the circumcision" ([Phil. 3:3](#)). To understand what Paul means by this, we must go to Colossians 2:10-12.

And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power: in whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ: buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

Here we see, not that baptism has taken the place of circumcision, but that the believer has them both. Both are spiritual: made without hands. Circumcision, the cutting off of the flesh, was completely fulfilled in Christ. He was circumcised ritually on the eighth day as an Israelite. Thirty-three years later on the cross He was circumcised again, when the Christ after the flesh was cut off in death. Though his flesh was not sinful flesh, yet it was reckoned so when He died the sinner's death. The believer, now in Christ, is a co-sharer in this real circumcision, and so Paul could declare that we are the true circumcision, in distinction to those who merely practiced a ritual, whom he now called "the concision," or mere flesh cutters.

### **BAPTISM--THE ANSWER OF A GOOD CONSCIENCE**

I Peter 3:18-21, which contains the above statement, has already been considered at length. It was there shown that Peter was not talking about ritual

baptism, but about Christ's death baptism. Nothing was said, however, about the phrase, "the answer of a good conscience towards God."

Vincent, in his *Word Studies in the New Testament*, has this to say on the word "answer."

Only here in the New Testament. In Classical Greek the word means a question and nothing else. The meaning here is much disputed, and can hardly be settled satisfactorily. The rendering "answer" has no warrant.

Doubtless if one believed that water baptism had the power to save, the question of a good conscience before God must be answered by water baptism. But the Hebrews epistle proves that rituals have no power to cleanse the conscience (10:2), and that the blood of Christ is the only thing that can purge the conscience from dead works, (9:14). Whatever the meaning of the word "answer" ("interrogation" in the Revised Version), it refers not to a ritual but to the death and resurrection of Christ.

### **BAPTISM--A CONFESSION**

Dr. I .M. Haldeman in his booklet, "Truth About Baptism," stated:

A baptistery set in the midst of a church building proclaims the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord as the good news of salvation by His vicarious death, and immortality by His triumphant resurrection.

If this be true, is it not strange that God did not command us to build baptisteries? The only way the Bible knows of making this truth known to a lost world is by the preaching of the gospel, not by a tank of water in a church building. Since the early believers did not have church buildings in the midst of which to set baptisteries, they were deprived of this means of making the truth known.

Water baptism in Bible times was not merely a means of confessing Christ. True, people who had confessed Christ were baptized, but baptism was more than mere confession. The words confess and confession are used twenty-seven times in the New Testament, but not once in connection with water baptism. Confess means to say the same thing. The only act which satisfies the scriptural use and meaning of the word is the spoken word of mouth. God never says anything about confessing through baptism, but He does say:

If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thine heart that God raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation (Rom. 10:9,10).

## QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER

1. What does covenant theology teach regarding baptism and circumcision?
2. Can you give any evidence from the New Testament that baptism did not take the place of circumcision?
3. If baptism did take the place of circumcision, then Romans 4:9-12 proves Abram was saved apart from what? Did Paul write this to prove that we today are saved as Abram was saved?
4. Does the believer today have anything to do with circumcision (Phil. 3:3)? How is this circumcision made?
5. When was Christ circumcised? Which of His circumcisions becomes ours?
6. In 1 Peter 3:18-21, is water baptism or the death and resurrection of Christ the answer (or question) of a good conscience toward God?
7. What does Hebrews 10:2 teach regarding the power of ceremonial observances in cleansing the conscience? What alone can give to a man a good conscience before God (Heb. 9:14)?
8. What denominations are you familiar with that teach the necessity of baptism for salvation, even for infants? If this teaching is true, what will happen to all unbaptized people, including infants?
9. What is the meaning of the word "confess?" Is it ever stated in Scripture that water baptism is a confession of Christ?
10. In what way are we called upon to confess Christ today? Give Scripture.

## CHAPTER 8

### THE MODE OF BAPTISM

No Treatment of baptism would be complete without a reference to the scriptural mode of the practice. This has been the main burden of most of the books written upon the subject. Men have been so occupied with the mode of water baptism that they have not even stopped to consider whether the practice itself has any place in this present Dispensation of Grace. It has been the contention of this writer, of course, that water has no place in God's spiritual program for today, and he has sought to give scriptural reasons for his convictions. Water baptism did have a very big place in God's program at one time, and it will now be our purpose to examine the Scripture to learn what we can about the mode.

Three different modes of baptism have been practiced, namely, sprinkling, pouring and immersion. These are sometimes called aspersion, affusion and immersion. Generally speaking there are but two views on the mode. One group holds that the mode is not the important thing and would admit the validity of any of these three modes as symbolizing or effecting the cleansing and renewing work of the Holy Spirit. The other group holds that the mode is the all important thing and insists upon immersion of the entire body as a symbol of burial. To the first group baptism is a bath and it matters not how much water is used or how it is applied. To the latter it is the burial of a dead body and nothing will satisfy but a putting under (although advocates of this view seem to forget that burial in Bible times was not always a putting under).

To turn to church history for our answer is both futile and useless. Hundreds of volumes have been written appealing to church history purportedly proving the correctness of all known modes. Besides, church history is a very poor guide. It proves only one thing -- how soon and how far the Church departed from the Scripture. Likewise, many books have been written, trying to prove all of the modes from the etymology of the word, baptism.

Out of the 106 references to baptism in the New Testament, all of which have been previously considered, seventy-three refer to a ceremonial water practice. Not one of those passages definitely describe a mode, although many of them contain sufficient inferences to show that the mode is not necessarily an immersion, and surely not a burial.

Remember that baptism was not a New Testament innovation, but a carryover from the Old Testament messianic Law dispensation. Judaism stood only in meats and drinks and divers baptisms ([Heb. 9:10](#)). The Jews did not ask John what the significance of his baptism was, as though it was a new thing to them, but they asked why he was baptizing if he was not the Messiah ([Jn. 1:25](#)).

Now it is well known that the divers baptisms of the Mosaic Law were mostly sprinklings or washings, and that they were all ceremonies of purification. And yet the Holy Spirit has chosen the Greek word, *baptismos* to describe them.

In the Law it was definitely required that baptisms take place in running water or in a place where there was plenty of water so that the water source would not itself become ceremonially unclean. There are thirty-seven references to water ceremonies in Leviticus alone. (See [Leviticus 14:5,6,50,51,52](#); [15:2,13](#); [22:4](#); [11:36](#).) This fact explains why baptisms in the Bible usually took place at a river or at a place like Aenon ([John 3:23](#)), "where there were many waters" (A.S.V. margin). Aenon means springs. There were many springs there, and this would satisfy the Levitical requirements if many people were to be baptized. The fact that baptizing was done at a river or at a place where there were springs of water does not necessarily imply the mode of immersion. Sprinkling or affusion could just as well have been practiced. Sprinkling occurs some fifty-five times in the Old Testament and is referred to in the New Testament as baptism, but immersion is not mentioned or described once in the Old Testament. A good Presbyterian has pointed out that the Israelites were baptized unto Moses but went over dry-shod, whereas the Egyptians were immersed but not baptized. The Presbyterians suppose the Israelites got sprinkled from the spray, but the Scriptures are silent on that point.

Those who contend that baptism is immersion and signifies burial and not cleansing, can produce only two verses in support of their theory {Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). If we were to grant for the moment that these two passages refer to water baptism, it would have to be admitted that all other references to baptism before the death of Christ, at least, do not refer to burial. Only the wildest speculation could imagine that John was burying the people who came out to be baptized of him. It is evident from such passages as John 3:25 that the people understood John's baptism to be a purifying ceremony and not a burial. Therefore baptism cannot be limited to immersion as a mode.

That Romans 6:5 and Colossians 2:12 do not refer at all to water baptism we have already shown. Unless water baptism is the thing that puts us into Christ and identifies us with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection, the immersionist has not one verse of Scripture to stand upon. While we have dealt quite at length already with these passages, we feel constrained to quote the words of a very able scholar, who in our estimation has answered the immersionist error better than any other we know. Dr. Joseph A. Seiss, although a believer in the practice of sprinkling for today, wrote a volume in 1858 entitled: *The Baptist System Examined*. We quote from a new edition issued in 1883 and published by G.W. Frederick, Philadelphia, pages 243-248:

In these words we have a sublime description of the wonderful efficacy of the gospel upon the inner being of believers, and of a condition of things resulting from their oneness with Christ, which amounts to an actual

reproduction of His crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection in the experiences of their hearts. But sublime and spiritual as these Scriptures are, the attempt has been made to harness them down as the mere dray-horses to drag out of the mire a hopeless sectarian cause. This so robs them of their literal force and meaning as to present them as the offspring of a luxuriant poetic imagination, employed upon remote resemblances of a point of external ceremony, as the mere intellectual play of a fancy, fond of tracing hint analogies and of amusing itself with alliterations.

According to our estimate of the type of Paul's mind, and of the conception and import of these passages, they are the words of a man of God laboring to express some of the profoundest mysteries of the transforming power of the Saviour's grace. He speaks neither of immersion nor affusion, nor of any mode of performing an external rite, but the inner purification of man's whole moral nature by incorporation with Jesus Christ. The crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection to which he alludes, so far from being mere images of immersion and emersion, are literal terms denoting realities, and pointing, not to a figurative, but to an actual death of every believer to his sins, and his real resurrection to newness of life. The cross here is not the cross of going under the water, but the inward crucifixion of the old man with the crucifixion of Christ. The parallel in the apostle's mind is not between the outward mode of external baptism, and the death, burial, and resurrection of the Saviour, but between these particulars of his passion, and the inward spiritual experiences of those who truly are his. His object is to show, not that Christians ought to walk in newness of life because figuratively raised from a water grave in an outward ceremony, but that justification by faith, so far from ministering to licentiousness, carries with it and effects in the soul an extinction of man's licentious and sinful being, and sets up in its place, a new and holy creature; that it actually transfers to the believer's heart the whole history of the Saviour's passion, and continues it there as a thing now transpiring in the hidden experiences of every true disciple. The contrary interpretation takes in about as much of the real sublimity of these passages, as the stupid traveller at Rome took in of the grandeur of the Coliseum by examining a detached piece of mortar from its walls.

But if we were even to admit the contrary interpretation, and agree that Paul is here tracing a comparison between the mode of baptism and the crucifixion, death, burial, and resurrection of Christ, then the apostle comes before us in the absurd position of attempting to run an analogy between things in no way analogous. There is no mode of baptism of which we ever heard which takes in, even in the remotest resemblance, the various facts of this part of the Saviour's history. Take the most favorable particulars, the burial and resurrection. What resemblance is there between water, the softest and most yielding of visible substances, and a solid rock, the very image of durability? What likeness between



dipping a man in a fluid, and depositing a dead body in a horizontal excavation in the breast of a declivity? What similarity between the wading of a living man into a stream or cistern, and the bearing of a corpse to its final resting-place? What analogy between the hasty lifting of a strangling subject from a plunge in the water, and the triumphant resurrection of the re-animated Jesus in the strength of his own omnipotence? What similitude between the glorified body of the rising Saviour, and the drowned and dripping aspect of the immersed subject coming up from his immersion? Could anything be more unlike than Christ, leaving His grave-clothes in His sepulchre of rock, and coming forth unaided in His incorruptible body, and a man lifted hastily from the water, the same clothing sticking sadly to him, and he looking a great deal worse than before his immersion? Is it not amazing that any human mind could have imagined that such a "sorry sight" bore any resemblance to the majestic and glorious resurrection of our blessed Lord?

But, again, what the apostle in verse 3 and 4 calls baptism into Christ, and into his death and burial in verse 5, he calls planting in the likeness of Christ's death. But what resemblance is there between immersion and Christ's death, or between immersion and planting in the likeness of Christ's death? Was he put to death by drowning? He was not thrust down in the water, but lifted up upon the cross. He did not die by being gently sunk into a yielding fluid, but by being violently nailed upon an unyielding stake. Neither is immersion in water a representation of the idea of planting. What similitude is there between the dripping, soiled, uncomfortable-looking man, lifted by another from the troubled water, and the beautiful young plant, painted by the rays and freshened by the showers of heaven, rising imperceptibly and noiselessly by the power of an inward life and vigor? If burial into Christ's death by baptism, then, is the same as planting in the likeness of Christ's death, as the setting of the scion of the new spiritual man by the crucifixion of the old, is it not as clear as language can make it, that the idea of immersion is entirely excluded?

Once more, the burial spoken of in these passages is not a burial in baptism, but a burial in Christ's death. Will language tolerate the idea of immersion in the death of another? Was Christ's crucifixion a fluid? There is purification in Christ's death; and by that purification the old man with his vestment of vices is buried with Christ, never to be raised again. But immersion in Christ's death, and that in the manner or likeness of that death (i.e. in a way resembling crucifixion), is an association of incoherences that may be comprehensible to a Carolina lawyer, but surely not to common sense.

Let us not be carried away, then, as too many have been, by the mere sound of a word. The burial of which the apostle speaks is not a mere figurative, but a literal and real burial, an actual abstraction and

concealment of it in the deep abyss of eternal sepulture. There is not one of all these allusions that sustains the immersionist theory -- no just laws of Exegesis will permit them to be thus tied down to the signification of mere mode. They prove that baptism is a sanctification, but they do not prove that it is immersion, or that immersion has anything to do with it.

### **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER**

1. What are the three principle modes of baptism which have been practiced?
2. To what particular view of baptism is the mode the all-important thing? Why?
3. Those who hold to sprinkling or pouring make baptism to mean or to symbolize what?
4. Does any passage in Scripture mention the mode that was used in baptism? Is it not reasonable to suppose that if the mode is so important Scripture would describe it?
5. What word is used in the English Old Testament to describe the "divers washings or baptisms?"
6. Why did the law of Moses specify that there should be running water or a large body of water where a number of people were to be purified?
7. Would the fact that John baptized in the Jordan prove that he practiced immersion?
8. What are the two passages from which Immersionists try to prove their case?
9. Name at least four inconsistencies which Dr. Seiss points out in the immersionist view.
10. Dr. Seiss points out that the parallel in the apostle's mind is not between the outward mode of external baptism, and the death, burial and resurrection of the Savior, but between what?

## CHAPTER 9

### WHY DID PAUL BAPTIZE?

#### WHO WAS COMMISSIONED TO BAPTIZE?

Is it not significant that the Twelve Apostles were the only men that Christ ever commissioned to practice water baptism? Paul declared explicitly, "Christ sent me not to baptize," and if we do not believe in the papal dogma of apostolic succession, where do we find any basis for our practice of it? In Old Testament days the priests were commissioned to practice water baptism, but did that mean every Israelite was thus commissioned? Of course not. Even a king in Israel was not permitted to engage in the priestly ministry -- in fact, one king was smitten with leprosy for presuming to do so.

There was, of course, a priestly succession in Israel in the Old Testament, but no apostolic succession in the New Testament. Why? Simply because these Twelve were to sit upon thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel in the Messianic Kingdom. They were to have no successors. The names of these Twelve are engraved on the twelve foundations of the wall of the new Jerusalem ([Rev. 21:14](#)). Their commission, which included the discipling and the baptizing of the nations, was intended to bring about the establishment of the Kingdom. We know now that Israel rejected their ministry and God for that reason suspended this Kingdom commission and ministry and made known His present purpose in grace through the Apostle Paul. Is it not unbelievably strange, then, that Christendom at large has bypassed Paul almost entirely, has gone back to the Twelve, and has tried to perpetuate a ministry which God has set aside for the duration of this present dispensation? And stranger still, many Christians arrogate to themselves the apostolic office and suppose everything Christ commanded the Twelve now devolves upon them to carry out.

Paul was just as much an apostle of Christ as were the Twelve, but he was the apostle of a new and a different dispensation. Did he go back to the commission Christ gave to the Twelve and say, "These are my marching orders," as most Christians do today? Did he reason that in order to be obedient to Christ he must carry out every command Christ gave to the Twelve? If he didn't, must we?

#### WAS PAUL SENT TO BAPTIZE?

Every one of the Twelve had to emphatically confess, "Christ *sent me* to baptize." Paul just as emphatically declared: "Christ *sent me not* to baptize." Is there any difference between these two statements? Not one bit, if you listen to the reasonings of those who practice water baptism today. They will all tell you without exception that Paul was sent to baptize just as much as the Twelve were.

What do his words mean, then? We are told they do not mean Christ did not send him to practice water baptism, but merely that his main ministry was preaching the gospel and that he delegated the less important work of baptizing the converts to others. We are of the number, however, who choose to believe Paul said what he meant, and meant what he said. Why should one be considered a heretic who commits no greater sin than to take the words of the great apostle upon his lips and repeat with him, "Christ sent me not to baptize?"

If water baptism is an act of obedience to Christ, if it is one of the ordinances of the church, if it is a sacramental means of grace whereby we receive forgiveness, if it is the divinely appointed means of confessing Christ to the world, if it is an outward sign of an inward grace, if it is the seal of our salvation, if it is our burial with Christ, if it is the answer of a good conscience toward God, how can we understand Paul's light treatment of it? If it was necessary, if it accomplished anything, if it was a basis for Christian fellowship, how could Paul in any sense of the word say: "*I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius.*"

If water baptism is any of these things men claim for it, is it not strange that we do not find even one word of positive instruction in all of Paul's epistles for its observance? He gives definite instruction concerning the observance of the Lord's Supper and is careful to state that he received this truth by revelation from the Lord. There were more sins and trouble at Corinth over the wrong observance of the Lord's Supper than were caused by baptism, but Paul did not proceed to thank God that he had not given them the Lord's Supper, not did he state, "Christ sent me not to observe the Lord's Supper."

The argument from silence is a strong one, and we might well question the validity of practicing baptism in this dispensation upon the basis of Paul's omission of any positive command to do so. But not only does Paul omit any command to perform it, he clearly states the opposite -- "Christ sent me not to baptize." Christians are free to believe what they will, and you may choose to believe that Paul meant to convey the very opposite meaning to what these words actually say, but if you do, then don't find fault with modernists and spiritualizers who choose to make any other part of the Bible to mean something different from what it says.

But some one will say, "I believe that Paul meant what he said, but how do you explain the fact he did practice water baptism?" We would point out the fact that the problem here raised poses a much greater difficulty for those who practice baptism than for those who do not. And the reason is that the former have no satisfactory scriptural answer to the question, whereas the latter do.

### **THE TRANSITION -- KEY TO PAUL'S BAPTIZING**

If we fail to recognize the transitional character of the Book of Acts we will

never understand Paul's practice of baptism, or his practice of many other things which sound, orthodox, fundamental Christians would not think of doing today. Did Christ send Paul to circumcise? "Of course not," you say. But Paul did practice circumcision ([Acts 16:3](#)). Did Christ send Paul to practice Jewish vows which involved the shaving of the head and the offering of animal sacrifices? Surely not. And yet he practiced such things during the Acts period ([Acts 18:18, 21:26](#)). Why don't we practice such things if Paul did? Paul thanked God for two things during that time: "I thank God I baptized none of you..." and "I thank God I speak in tongues more than ye all" ([1 Cor. 1:14, 18](#)). The majority of orthodox preachers today thank God for how many they have baptized and condemn as heretics those who do not practice baptism, and they thank God they do not speak in tongues and condemn as fanatics those who do. Any one with an ounce of reasoning ability should be able to see the inconsistency of this.

In order to understand Paul's practice of baptism, we must recognize that he was saved during the Pentecostal administration of the gospel of the Kingdom, and that Ananias was sent to him with the same message as was presented to any Jewish believer of that day, "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" ([Acts 22:16](#)). Paul labored for some eight or nine years after this among his own people of Israel where this baptism was practiced. Peter had been sent to the Gentile, Cornelius, and had commanded him to be baptized, although there was no obligation laid upon him to be circumcised. It was out of this dispensational situation that Paul emerged into the new dispensation which God committed to him. This emergence was not a sudden one, cutting off completely and at once everything that was to pass away, but it was gradual, covering a period of twenty to thirty years.

It was during this period Paul still had liberty among the Jews to practice those things which were still in order for Jewish believers to practice, and among the Gentiles there were still the manifestation of the sign gifts like tongues, healings, and also the practice of water baptism. Paul would circumcise a half-Jew, Timothy, but he would not circumcise a Gentile, because Christ had never given any command to the Twelve or to Paul to circumcise a Gentile, but had expressly commanded just the opposite ([Acts 15:1,24](#)) while at the same time permitting the practice upon believing Jews ([Acts 15:21; 21:21-25](#)). But Christ had commanded the Twelve to baptize both Jew and Gentile in their Kingdom gospel ministry, and so Paul, emerging from that dispensation, also baptized some Jews and Gentiles, although Christ had never commissioned him definitely to do so.

## **PROGRESSIVE REVELATION**

As Paul received more and more revelation of God's purpose and program in this present Dispensation of Grace (see [Acts 26:16; 2 Cor. 12:1](#)), he came to realize the significance of the omission of water baptism from his commission and the abiding reality of the one divinely wrought baptism which was so

intimately a part of the special body of truth committed to his trust. By the time he wrote 1 Corinthians he surely realized these facts fully and clearly, even to the extent that he could thank God that he had baptized none there, save a very few.

As far as the record of the Bible goes, Lydia and her household were baptized, as were the Philippian jailer and his household after Paul had preached to them ([Acts 16:15,33](#)), although the Scriptures are silent as to whether Paul or Silas did the baptizing. Then Paul baptized Crispus and Gaius and the household of Stephanas ([1 Cor. 1:14-16](#)). No doubt many others who were saved during those days under Paul 's ministry were also baptized, but it should be remembered that there were many others like Apollos who were practicing and preaching John's baptism ([Acts 18:25; 19:1](#)); and many had been at Jerusalem on that notable Pentecost from various regions of the world, and many others had been scattered by persecutions who would preach Peter's baptism, which was merely an advance on John's baptism. Peter was never in Corinth, and yet there was a Peter (Cephas) Party there ([1 Cor. 1:12](#)). It should also be remembered that Paul's two foremost fellow workers, Barnabas and Silas, were chosen men from the associates of the Twelve in Jerusalem. We are surely not to suppose that wherever Paul went he established a Gentile church separate from the Jewish believers -- in fact, the very secret or mystery committed to Paul was that believing Jews and Gentiles were now becoming joint members of a joint-body. These different classes were being united, and it would have been strange indeed had there not been a period of transition from practices of the Kingdom gospel to the program of the present dispensation. It is thus only natural to find water baptism in Paul's early ministry, just as we find tongues, healings, and physical miracles.

The giving of the Holy Spirit and the bestowment of spiritual gifts was a sovereign act of God. Whereas God demanded water at Pentecost before He gave the Holy Spirit and later changed the order and gave the Spirit upon believing, man could do nothing but accept God's order. Water baptism, on the other hand, is not a sovereign act of God, but a practice of man. And though God has told us in His Word that there is just one baptism for today, men can and do continue to practice another or an additional baptism.

The last record of water baptism is Acts 19:5,6:

When they heard they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus, and when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.

Scholars are not agreed whether the language of this verse: "When they heard they were baptized," refers to their hearing of John's baptism or to their hearing of Paul. If the former is true, then of course Paul did not rebaptize them. But in any case, the speaking with tongues, which is associated with water baptism in most of its occurrences, did take place.

There is but one further reference to baptism in the New Testament which has not been considered in this treatment, and that is Hebrews 6:1,2:

Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on to perfection; not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, and of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.

This epistle to the Hebrews is the final call for believing Jews to come out of the camp of Judaism and to bear the reproach of Christ ([Heb. 13:13](#)). It now calls upon these Jews to leave, lay aside, let alone, omit, put away (these are all translations of the original word in the Authorized Version) the whole teaching about baptisms. Paul tells us that he received no commission to practice baptism in his Gentile ministry, and here the Jews are told to lay aside the teaching of baptisms. The conclusion is inescapable for one who sincerely desires to follow the Word of God rightly divided.

### **QUESTIONS YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO ANSWER**

1. What is the difference between the commissions of Paul and of the Twelve in regard to water baptism?
2. If water baptism is a means of grace or the basis of fellowship or of church membership, do you think Paul could have said: "I thank God I baptized none of you..."?
3. How many instances are actually recorded of Paul practicing water baptism?
4. Did Paul practice any other religious observances during the Acts period besides baptism which Christ did not commission him to do?
5. Why do you suppose if Paul would circumcise a man like Timothy but refuse to circumcise a Gentile, he would baptize both Jews and Gentiles?
6. Did Paul get all of his revelation of truth at one time? What evidence is there for our answer?
7. Do you think Paul's statement in I Corinthians 1:17 means that Christ commanded him not to baptize, or that Christ omitted all reference to baptism when He commissioned Paul?
8. Since there were tongues, healings, and other gifts of physical miracles in evidence among the Jewish believers at the time Paul was

saved, do you think it unusual that these same things should have been included in Paul's ministry for a certain period? According to Mark 16:16,17 and similar passages, does water baptism seem to be definitely linked with tongues, etc.? Look up all of references to water baptism in the Acts and see whether this principle holds.

9. If God withdrew the sign gifts and water baptism, could man practice either one of them? What would be the difference?
10. We know from Acts 21:20-25 that the Jewish believers continued to practice the ceremonies of the law of Moses. The Hebrews epistle in calling them to come out of the camp of Judaism and to bear the reproach of Christ, also tells them to do what with the doctrine of baptisms?



# CHAPTER 10

## SUMMARY

In this chapter we will gather together in summarized form all of the important facts about baptism, both ritual and real, that are given to us in God's Word.

1. The first reference historically to baptism is the typical baptism which Noah's Ark underwent in the flood. The antitype of this was Christ's baptism of death which He underwent upon the Cross when all the billows of God's wrath flowed over Him. It is through this death baptism of Christ that we are saved ([I Pet. 3:18-22](#)).

2. Before ceremonial baptism was instituted, the children of Israel were figuratively baptized in the cloud and in the sea unto the headship of Moses ([I Cor. 10: 1-2](#)). Baptism here has the sense of identification or union with Moses.

3. Ritual baptism was first instituted at Sinai under the Law of Moses. Judaism had its standing "in meats and drinks and divers baptisms" ([Heb. 9:10](#)). The priests were washed or baptized when they were inducted into office ([Ex. 29:4](#)). Since God chose Israel to be a kingdom of priests ([Ex. 19:6](#); [I Pet. 2:9](#); [Rev. 1:6](#)). John and the apostles demanded baptism for the whole nation of Israel. Under the Law ceremonial washing was also required for all who were unclean for any reason, both Jew and Gentile, as for example in Leviticus 17:15. Since the Gentiles were to be included in the messianic Kingdom (see [Isaiah 56:6,7](#)) baptism was also required of them under the so-called Great Commission.

4. The Jews added many of their own baptismal practices to their God-given religion, which the Lord Jesus called "traditions of the elders" and which in effect made void the commandment of God ([Mk. 7:8](#)).

5. John the Baptist came baptizing with water for at least a two-fold purpose:

- ◆ To restore God 's covenant people, Israel, and thus prepare them for the coming of the Messiah and the establishment of the Kingdom. His baptism was for the forgiveness of sins ([Lk. 3:3](#)). Those who refused John's baptism rejected the counsel of God and remained unforgiven ([Lk. 7:30](#)).
- ◆ To introduce Jesus Christ as the Messiah to Israel ([Jn. 1:31](#)). This probably has a typical connection with the baptism of Aaron ([Ex. 29:4](#)).

7. Baptism, like animal sacrifices, was in itself not able to effect the forgiveness of sins ([Heb. 9:10-14](#); [10:4](#)), but it was an expression of faith, apart from which no one could please God, and it was therefore a necessary act at the time it was practiced. Just so, circumcision was at one time absolutely essential ([Gen. 17:10-14](#)). To demand it now for any spiritual reason would be to frustrate the grace of God ([Gal. 5:2](#)).

8. John predicted that the Messiah would baptize with the Holy Ghost and with fire ([Matt. 3:11](#)). This baptism with the Holy Ghost took place on the day of Pentecost. It was called by Christ, "the promise of my Father" ([Luke 24:49](#); [Acts 1:4,5](#)). There is no reference or inference that this baptism formed the Body of Christ. Christ stated that as a result of this baptism they would "be endued with power from on high." This enduement was seen in the miraculous signs and gifts manifested at Pentecost ([Acts 2:3, 16-20,43](#), etc).

The baptism of fire, the burning up of the chaff with unquenchable fire, is yet future and will take place when Christ returns as King ([Matt. 25:41](#); [2 Thes. 1:7-9](#)).

9. Christ was baptized twice: first by John with water to fulfill all righteousness, thus identifying Himself with sinful humanity ([Matt. 3:15](#)), and second with death ([Luke 12:50](#)), to complete that work of identification with sinful humanity by bearing all of humanity's sins in His own body on the tree.

10. The Twelve Apostles, who had been baptized by John, were not rebaptized at Pentecost, as John's baptism and that which they had been commissioned to practice were of the same character. Thus if the baptism commanded by Christ in the so-called Great Commission was Christian baptism in contrast to John's baptism, as many contend, then the Twelve Apostles never received Christian baptism. The fact is that both baptisms were the same (compare [Luke 3:3](#) with [Acts 2:38](#)) and neither was any more Christian than the other. People received the Holy Spirit after being baptized by the apostles, not because the baptism was different, but because Christ had died and had ascended.

11. Water baptism is stated as a prerequisite to salvation in the so-called Great Commission ([Mark 16:16](#)). Ritualistic churches insist upon the basis of this that baptism is both necessary and introductory to salvation. Most evangelical churches insist that this is our commission, but try to change the sense of Christ's words to mean, He that believeth and is saved should be baptized; whereas Christ said, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. Other evangelicals believe this entire commission was given with a view to the establishment of the messianic Kingdom, that it was set aside with the postponement of the Kingdom, and that the Church through Paul was given another commission which does not even include ritual baptism.

12. The Church of this present dispensation is separate and distinct from Israel and the messianic Kingdom. The Church which is called Christ's Body was not made known until it was revealed to and through Paul. In Paul's epistles it is revealed that all who now believe the Gospel that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again are baptized by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ ([1 Cor. 12:13](#)).

13. Paul states that there is *one baptism* for the Church today ([Eph. 4:5](#)). This could not be both Water and Spirit baptism; for that would be *two baptisms*. It could not be water, because Paul makes it plain that it is by means of Spirit baptism that we are made members of His Body. To make it water would be to rule out the only means of becoming a member of that Body. Hence the one baptism for the Body of Christ is Spirit baptism.

14. This one baptism of the Spirit identifies the believer with Christ in His death, burial, resurrection, and ascension ([Rom. 6:3-6](#)). Paul refers to this truth in this passage to show the inconsistency of one who had been baptized into Christ continuing to live in sin. To be baptized into Christ, (and only the Spirit can do that) means to be baptized into His death, and one who has died is freed from sin.

15. Thus the word baptism has as a basic meaning to become identified with. The original root (*bapto*) means to dip or to stain with dye, i.e., a material becomes permanently identified with the dye by taking on its color or character. The children of Israel became identified with Moses as their leader when they came through the Red Sea. Christ identified Himself with humanity when He was baptized by John. He completely identified Himself with man and his sin when He was baptized in death on the Cross. We become identified with Him when we are baptized by the Holy Spirit into His Body.

16. The word baptism does not mean immersion, although an immersion could be a baptism. An object could be immersed without being baptized, and it could be baptized without being immersed. Neither is baptism a burial. We are buried with Christ *through* baptism into death ([Rom. 6:4](#)). It is through the agency of the Spirit's baptism into Christ's death that we are buried with Christ.

17. There is no record of infant baptism in the Bible. Household baptism ([Acts 16:15,33](#)) does not necessarily include infants, for it is altogether possible that neither of these households had any infants. New Testament baptism is always associated with repentance, which would be impossible for an infant. Infant baptizers base their practice largely upon the false premise that baptism took the place of circumcision, a ceremony performed when the child was eight days old.

18. Although Paul did practice some water baptism in his early ministry,

there is no indication that he ever baptized for the remission of sins as did the Twelve at Pentecost. If his baptizing had had such significance he would never have said that Christ sent him not to baptize, and that he thanked God he had baptized so few. Before Paul was separated unto his ministry, Peter preached to Cornelius, who received the Holy Spirit upon believing, and afterward Peter baptized him with water ([Acts 10:47](#)). This, then, was not a baptism for the remission of sins, (although the baptism of the so-called Great Commission was for the forgiveness of sins). There is no record that any Gentile under either Peter's or Paul's preaching was baptized for the remission of sins. It is evident from Paul's epistles that the Holy Spirit was imparted and salvation was received wholly apart from baptism. Paul's practice of baptism was somewhat akin to his doing many other things during the Acts period which were associated with the dispensation of things under which he was saved and from which he emerged, but which were not a part of his definite commission.

19. It is essential to a proper understanding of the subject of baptism to see the unique character of the revelation vouchsafed to the apostle Paul. The Church at large for many centuries has confused the ministries of Paul and the Twelve, and the resultant confusion and division should be sufficient to show that there has been something basically wrong with our handling of the Scripture. The Word sets forth the one baptism as a basis for Christian unity and water baptism has been the cause of great disunity.

Once the fact is seen that a hitherto unprophesied dispensation was committed to the apostle Paul, one not only unforeseen by the Old Testament prophets but not even made known by Christ while He was on earth, nor revealed by the Holy Spirit at Pentecost, the many seemingly contradictory practices and principles become reconciled. All Christian denominations have a certain amount of Scripture upon which they base their practices, and it all depends upon whether their emphasis is on Petrine or Pauline truth as to whether they are to be classed as ritualistic or evangelical branches of the church.

By way of illustration, the Roman Catholic Church (which begins by making Peter the first pope), the high church Episcopalian, the Lutheran, and a number of lesser denominations hold to a literal interpretation of such passages as Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38; 22:16 and therefore teach the necessity of water baptism for the forgiveness of sins. On the other hand, there are a number of the more evangelical denominations which lean more toward Pauline truth and salvation by grace apart from works of righteousness. These rightly assume that Paul's teachings cannot be harmonized with a literal interpretation of the above passages, so they spiritualize or de-emphasize them, instead of seeing the difference of dispensation between them. Thus they continue to practice the ceremony, but not with its scriptural significance, much as the Seventh Day Adventists tries to keep the Sabbath day without its penalties.

One thing is certain, the Church will never know what it is to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bonds of peace until its leaders know what the one baptism is. Nineteen centuries of trying to make the one baptism to be water baptism, or of denying the one baptism and contending for two have created much disunity. There is no hope of Christians ever getting together in scriptural unity as long as they hold to water baptism. They will never agree on its significance or its mode. They can never reconcile the scriptural statements about water baptism with the Pauline doctrine of grace. Under such circumstances unity can only be attained by compromise of convictions, and that is worse than disunity.

But rather than submit to the truth and enjoy the Spirit's unity, many will continue to brand this truth of the one baptism as controversial and divisive and will go on following the traditions of the elders and trying to effect a man-made unity. Many, on the other hand, thank God, will not permit prejudice and tradition to blind their eyes, but will go back to search the Scriptures again to see whether these things be true. And once they are convinced this is God's truth for today, it is hoped that they will courageously stand for their convictions, not in contentiousness, but in true grace. God wants us to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery, but we cannot do this without holding to the sevenfold unity of the Spirit with all lowliness and meekness, with long-suffering, forbearing one another in love.

If God's truth of the secret of the gospel as revealed through Paul's epistles is once recognized, and the one baptism of that distinctive body of truth is embraced, Christians will then know what it is that gives them a real basis for unity. It is nothing less than the real baptism by the Holy Spirit into the Body of Christ.

## APPENDIX

### FIGURATIVE USE OF WATER

There are several passages of Scripture which, while not mentioning baptism, have been interpreted as referring to baptism. The writer has felt it necessary to deal with these passages to present a more complete treatment of the subject.

#### **John 3:5**

Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the Kingdom of God.

At the time these words were spoken, it is evident John was preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, and that it was necessary to be baptized by John in order to be restored to the place of Israel's promised covenant blessings. However, it is nowhere stated or intimated that John's baptism effected a new birth. Even if it had done so, this would prove nothing in regard to God's means in salvation for today, for it is just as evident that this took place some years before the New Covenant in Christ's blood was made and was therefore under the Old Covenant, when animal sacrifices and all of the Mosaic rituals were still in effect. If man could be regenerated by water baptism and thus receive God's Spirit and eternal life before and apart from the death of Christ, we may well ask, what need was there for Christ to die? Christ would have died in vain ([Gal. 2:21](#)).

But was the water of John 3:5 intended by Christ to be literal water? Seven other times in this Gospel our Lord spoke of spiritual water. In the very next chapter He invited the woman at the well to drink of this living water which He would give and which would result in everlasting life. By no stretch of the imagination could this be made to mean literal water. It is the spiritual, living water, the Word of God. Peter, who at Pentecost preached water baptism for the remission of sins, tells us plainly in his first epistle:

Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God, which liveth and abideth forever...And this is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you (1:23-25).

Regardless of how regeneration took place before, Peter makes it plain that under his preaching at the time he wrote his epistle, believers were born again by the Word of God, and not by some ceremony performed by man. It is only logical to conclude that our Lord meant this also in John 3:5.

Since John's Gospel was written for the express purpose "that ye might

believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing, ye might have life through his name," and since believing is dozens of times made to be the only condition of receiving salvation in the Gospel of John, is it not strange that John omits all reference to any command of Christ to His apostles to baptize with water, if indeed John intends to convey the message that the way to be saved, to have eternal life, to be born again is by water baptism?

Even in the Old Testament prophecies water is used in a spiritual sense. When Isaiah said, "Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation" (12:3), would any suppose that in that day foretold there would be some holes in the ground out of which people would draw buckets of salvation? Or when God said in Ezekiel 16:9 that He had washed Israel with water when He picked her up and made her His own, would any be so naive as to suppose the Lord took a basin of water and literally washed all of the Israelites? Or when Ezekiel states in 36:25 that God will sprinkle clean water upon Israel and cleanse them from all of their filthiness, are we to suppose He means literal water, especially in the light of Hebrews 10:22? After having told us of the absolute inability of the blood of bulls and of goats and the sprinkling of holy water to cleanse from sin, are we to suppose this New Testament writer points us back to these beggarly elements when he says, "Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water?"

### **Ephesians 5:26**

That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.

This passage speaks of Christ in His relationship to the Church -- how He has done a work which will make it possible for Him someday to present the Church to Himself as a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing, even as a bride adorned in all of her beautiful and spotless finery is presented to the bridegroom. If this glorious work is accomplished through water baptism, is it not beyond all explanation that the very apostle who was made the administrator and revelator of this truth was not commissioned to practice water baptism?

### **Titus 3:5-7**

Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; that being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Both the Ephesian passage above and this one have in common the use of the word, *loutron* or laver, for washing. Both the Weymouth and the Berkeley

versions take the liberty to translate this, "baptismal water." Practically all sacramentalists use these two passages as their chief prooftexts for baptismal regeneration, and such they are if *loutron* or bath refers to water baptisms.

*Loutron* is the word the translators of the Septuagint used for the word laver in such passages as Exodus 38:8, Leviticus 8:11, etc. Actual water was used in this Old Testament laver, but the book of Hebrews in the New Testament makes it abundantly plain that these washings of the priests at the laver were but shadows and types of spiritual realities which we have in Christ (see [Heb. 9:8-12; 10:1](#)).

The case of the sacramentalist today is akin to that of a student who hears his teacher say, "In order to illustrate the flow of an electric current through a wire, let us use the analogy of pouring a bucket of water through a pipe," and then goes to his room and pours a bucket of water on the light bulb in an effort to turn on the light. There is nothing wrong with the type or analogy, but it becomes ridiculous when it is substituted for the reality. The laver of regeneration of which Paul speaks is the antitype of the Old Testament laver. To put literal water into Paul's laver is just as ridiculous and impossible as for our student above to run water through the light bulb. And yet millions of people believe that the same literal water which God gave to the Israelites as an illustration of the great salvation He would someday provide, is in fact the thing which now saves them.

It is understandable how a person might be ignorant of Old Testament typology and miss the meaning of Paul's language, but it is inconceivable how one can read the first clause of this verse, "not by works of righteousness which we have done," and then argue that Paul is saying in the next clause that it is by works of righteousness which we have done that we are saved. Surely water baptism is a work of righteousness, as are all of the other religious ceremonies and ordinances which God ever commanded. But, says Paul, it is not by any such works which we have done -- it is altogether by His mercy that He has saved us.

Surely there are no more fitting words with which to bring this study to a close, "that being justified by grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life."