

Baptism: An Act of Faith by Mark Legendre

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. Out of all the issues that are discussed in the Bible, "baptism" has surely become one of the most controversial.
 - 1. There are disagreements over the mode of baptism, namely, is it sprinkling, pouring, or immersion? (outward sign > inward grace)
 - 2. There is disagreement over the purpose of baptism: is it for the remission of sins or not?
 - 3. And there is a great dispute over the question as to whether or not baptism is really essential to salvation.
- B. It is not my direct intention to deal with these specific issues in this lesson. (These things have been dealt with extensively before.)
- C. It is my intention in this lesson to look at "baptism" from a little different perspective.
 - 1. As we shall learn in the lesson today, "baptism" is an "act of faith."
 - 2. When an individual submits himself to be "baptized," he is making a "statement of faith" in regards to several different but very important Bible facts.
- D. Let's see what these facts are.

II. BAPTISM: A DECLARATION OF FAITH!

- A. When an individual submits himself to be baptized, he is manifesting his belief in God and in His son Jesus Christ! (Heb. 11:6 / 1 Pet. 3:21) [Appeal to God] (Jn. 8:24)
 - 1. Understanding this basic truth helps us to properly comprehend the meaning of Mark 16:15-16. Emphasis is placed upon "belief in the Gospel" in this scripture as a prerequisite to baptism. It is for this reason that Jesus does not mention baptism in the second part of this scripture.
 - a. Any individual that does not first believe the Gospel does not qualify to be baptized; therefore, there was no need to mention baptism again.
 - b. Consider the question of the Ethiopian eunuch and the response that Phillip gave to him. (Acts 8:35-39) [If thou believest, thou mayest!]
 - 2. Clearly then it can be seen that baptism is an "act of faith" in that the individual being baptized is saying by this act that they "believe in God and in the Lord Jesus Christ." (Mk. 16:16 / 1 Cor. 15:1-4)
- B. When an individual submits himself to be baptized, he is manifesting his belief in the "death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ!" (Rom. 6:3-5)
 - 1. If an individual does not believe that Christ was raised from the dead, then he does not qualify to be baptized. (1 Cor. 15:12-13, 29 / 1 Pet. 3:21)

2. Baptism is a "symbolic re-enactment" of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (Col. 2:12 / Rom 6:5-6). Baptism is meaningless if Jesus was not raised from the dead!
- C. When an individual submits himself to be baptized, he is manifesting his belief that "he is a sinner" in need of "having his sins forgiven!" (Lk. 5:8 / Lk. 18:13) (Rom 3:23) (1 Jn 3:4) (Jn. 8:21)
1. The Bible clearly and unmistakably teaches that the primary purpose of baptism is "for the remission of sins." (Acts 2:38 / Acts 22:16) (Col 2:11-13)
 2. If you don't believe you have any sins, then you don't qualify for baptism.
- D. When an individual submits himself to be baptized, he is manifesting his belief in the "power of the blood of Jesus to wash away his sins!" (Acts 2:16 / Rev. 1:5) (Heb. 10:4) (Mt. 26:28)
1. The accusation is sometimes made against members of the church of Christ that we believe that "water washes away sin." (Nothing could be further from the truth!) > (This is simply a "smokescreen" to prejudice people against the church of Christ!) (Eph. 1:7)
 2. The real truth is that it is only when an individual is "baptized into the death of Christ" that he shows his faith in the blood of Christ to wash away his sins." (Rom. 3:23-26 / Rom. 6:3-4) > (1 Pet 3:21)
 3. It is God who "forgives the individual's sins" when that individual is "baptized into the death of His Son Jesus Christ!" (Act 22:16 / Rev. 1:5 / Col. 2:12-13) > (AND NOT BEFORE THIS TIME!)
- E. When an individual submits himself to be baptized, he is manifesting his desire to become a "child of God!"
1. A person becomes a "child of God" only when they have been "baptized into Christ." (AND NOT BEFORE!) (Gal. 3:26-27)
 2. You may have been told that you became a "child of God" at the point of "faith in Christ" before baptism, but don't you believe this false teaching for a moment! (Jn. 1:11-12 / Acts 8:35-39 / Gal. 3:27)
- F. When an individual submits himself to be baptized, he is manifesting his belief that there is "salvation in Jesus Christ!" (2 Tim. 2:10)
1. There are only two scriptures in the entire Bible which tell us how an individual "comes into Christ" where "salvation is found!" (Rom. 6:3-4 / Gal. 3:27)
 2. Yes indeed, "baptism is essential for salvation!" (Mk. 16:16 / 1 Pet. 3:21) (Jn 14:6) "ALL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST (EPH. 1:3)"
 3. Every single individual who has been baptized believing that he was already saved before baptism, has been "baptized in vain."

- a. To believe this way is to say it's possible to be saved "without the blood of Jesus Christ." (Rv. 1:5) (Acts 22:16)
- b. To believe this way is to say that it is possible to be saved "without being in Christ." (2 Tim. 2:10) To believe this way is to say it is possible to be saved "without becoming a child of God." (Gal. 3:27)
- c. To believe this way is to say that it is possible to be saved "without the forgiveness of your sins." (Acts 22:16) Newness of Life Rom 6:3-4 / 2 Cor. 5:17

III. CONCLUSION

- A. Baptism is indeed an "act of faith."
- B. People who refuse to be baptized are likewise refusing to make a statement of their faith and trust in God for salvation through His Son Jesus Christ! (Lk 7:29-30)
- C. "WHAT DO TH HINDER YOU FROM BEING BAPTIZED?"