

BAPTISM IS AND ISN'T

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. In spite of the fact that the N.T. Scriptures are plain and simple making it easy to understand what they say about baptism, there continues to be widespread and varied disagreement and much controversy over the subject of baptism as taught in the N.T.
2. For this reason our present study of the subject under the topical heading "Baptism Is And Isn't" is designed to help settle the controversy by a simple examination of many of the N.T. passages in order to point out what they say, declare, or reveal about baptism as to what it is and what it isn't.
3. To this end, or for this purpose, note with me the following points for study.

II. DISCUSSION

A. **Baptism is for taught believers, not the untaught, Mt.28:18,19; Mk.16:15,16; Ac.8:35-37.**

1. Note what precedes baptism in these passages: Teaching. They are first taught, then baptized.
2. There is no passage teaching that one is to be or can be scripturally baptized before and without first being taught the gospel.
3. This being true, infant baptism is not a Bible doctrine; neither babies, nor unteachable persons, nor unbelievers, are subjects for Bible baptism.

B. **Baptism is for the taught, penitent, believer in Christ, even the baptism of John the Baptism, the Harbinger of Christ, Mt.3:1-10; Ac.2:36-38.**

1. In Ac.2, they were taught; they then believed; they, as believers, were told to repent; then were told to be baptized.
2. Some have been known to say, "If I really thought one had to be baptized in order to be saved, I'd be willing to force that person to be baptized!"
3. Such an expressed thought overlooks a vital point of Bible teaching as to what baptism is and for whom it is: One is

required to believe and repent before he can be scripturally baptized.

C. Baptism is something the taught, penitent, believer in Christ must do, or is commanded to do, in order to be saved, or to receive remission of past sins, Mk.16:15,16; Ac.2:36-38 (see Vv.21-23; 3:19) Mt.26:28 (“for”); Ac.9:6; 22:8-16; Ac.10:5,6,33-35,44-48; 1Pet.3:21; Heb.5:8,9; Lk.6:46.

1. Note *who* was told *what* to do and for what *purpose*.
2. Thus, it is to be saved; not because of having been saved!
3. Therefore, baptism isn't for saved people; it's to save people!
4. In every Bible passage in which both baptism and a word corresponding to forgiveness or being saved are found, baptism always precedes that word, never after it; it is always unto or in order to, not because of.

D. Baptism is not something required as a condition of forgiveness of sins committed by one after having been converted to Christ, or after by faith having been baptized into Christ in obeying the gospel of Christ, Ac.8:5-24.

1. Baptism isn't a command given to or something required of children of God for remission of sins committed after having obeyed the gospel and becoming a Christian.
2. But repentance, confession and prayer are, Ac.8:18-23.

E. Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ is something Abraham, Moses, David and even the thief on the cross could be saved without, but isn't something you and I can be saved without!

1. Question: Why? We are often the question: “What about the thief on the cross? If he could be saved without baptism, why can't we?”
2. Two answers can be given both of which involve the law under which he lived.
 - a. He may have been baptized with John's baptism prior to Jesus saying to him, “Today thou shalt be with me in paradise,” Lk.23:43. See Mt.3:1-6.

- b. He lived and died under the Law of Moses, a law that did not require baptism in the name of Christ in order to be saved!
- 3. You and I do live under the law of Christ that does require baptism in his name for the remission of sins, a law requiring such beginning at Pentecost in Ac.2. Cf. Ac.11:15.

F. Baptism is a burial in water, Rom.6:3-6; Col.2:12; Ac.10:47,48; 22:16.

- 1. Therefore, so-called baptism by sprinkling or pouring is not Bible baptism.
- 2. The doctrine of baptism by sprinkling or pouring exists solely by the authority of men, taught only in the creeds of men. Cf. Mt.15:9.

G. Baptism is the final act of the believer in the process of conversion whereby one is raised up from the dead to walk in newness of life with Christ, Rom.6:1-6.

H. Baptism isn't the only condition of salvation from past sin, but is one of the conditions specified by Jesus, the Savior, and his Apostles, in obeying the gospel in order to be saved, Mt.28:18,19; Mk.16:15,16; Ac.2:36-41; 10:3-6; 11:13,14; 10:31-35,44-48; 1Pet.3:21; 1Pet.4:17,18; 2Th.1:6-10.

III. CONCLUSION

- 1. Baptism's place in man's salvation from past sins has been assigned by divine order, a place that follows some things and precedes another.
- 2. Baptism's place by divine order:
 - a. Follows hearing, believing, repenting, confessing Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God.
 - b. Precedes salvation or remission of past sins.
- 3. Who gave man – any man or group of men – the authority to change the order of the divine plan or the purpose of it in the divine plan?
- 4. The problem of understanding what the N.T. Scriptures say baptism is and isn't really isn't a problem, or isn't the problem. The problem is being willing to believe it and obey accordingly!