

# NOTES ON WATER BAPTISM

- I. Salvation is strictly by faith in Christ and His work on the cross; nothing else is necessary for one to have eternal life than to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Jn. 1:12, 3:16, 20:31; Acts 16:31; Rom. 3:22; ICor. 1:21; ; ITim. 1:16; IJn. 5:13
- A. It is clear from the Word of God that believing in God is not enough to procure eternal life; one must place their faith in the God/Man. James 2:19; Jn. 6:29, 8:24, 11:26
  - B. Faith is a non-meritorious system of thinking in which the merit lies in the object and not in the one exercising belief; therefore, it is the only system that is available to all men and the means by which God imparts eternal life. Rom. 1:17; Eph. 2:8; Heb. 11:6
  - C. Any type of human works are not only unnecessary for obtaining salvation, they are rejected by God completely. Rom. 3:20,27, 9:32; Gal. 2:16; IITim. 1:9
  - D. Logically, any teaching that indicates that baptism, or any other work, is necessary for salvation is erroneous.
- II. Erroneous concepts related to baptism.
- A. Infants should be baptized to rid them of original sin.
    - 1. This is primarily, though not exclusively, taught by the Roman Catholic Church and is based on a misunderstanding of the sin nature, since original sin does not exist and the sin of Adam is not imputed to his descendants.
      - a. They tend to view baptism as one of the seven sacraments necessary for salvation.
      - b. A sacrament is defined as a sign of something sacred; however, *sacraments are not merely signs, they cause grace in the souls of men. Catholic Encyclopedia*
    - 2. There is no biblical precedent for baptizing infants; in fact, the Bible indicates that one must have made a conscious decision to accept Christ prior to baptism. Acts 8:35-38
  - B. Baptism washes away our sins.
    - 1. The Bible very clearly states that any type of overt, physical washing, or any ritual, cannot cleanse us from sin. Heb. 10:4; IPet. 3:20-21
    - 2. The very fact that you have to repeat rituals demonstrates that they are not effective in producing salvation. Heb. 10:2,11
    - 3. Simply put, rituals are not reality; they can only picture some reality.
  - C. Baptism is necessary for salvation.
    - 1. The Bible is very clear that works are not effective in saving our souls. Gal. 2:16; Eph. 2:8-9
    - 2. The thief on the cross disproves the false doctrine that baptism is required for anyone to have eternal life. Lk. 23:43
  - D. You must understand all the doctrines related to baptism in order to qualify for baptism.
    - 1. There are many doctrines that are difficult to understand and one does not have to grasp every detail in order to obey God. IIPet. 3:16
    - 2. There are believers that have been on doctrine for years that do not fully grasp the meaning and implication of retroactive and current positional truth.
- III. The biblical position on water baptism.
- A. The Greek verb βαπτίζω (baptizo) means to immerse one thing in another, stressing the identification of one thing with another.
    - 1. It was used in Homer to speak of the smith as he dipped the hot metal into the water, baptizing it, identifying the metal fully with the water.
    - 2. The biblical norm for baptism is immersion in water.
  - B. It was commanded by the risen Christ to His followers, and there is no scripture that has rescinded that command. Matt. 28:19

- C. Water baptism was practiced on new converts by the apostles and their followers.
  1. Peter. Acts 2:38,41, 10:48
  2. Philip. Acts 8:12
  3. Paul. Acts 9:18, 16:15,33, 18:8; ICor. 1:14
- D. While it is not necessary for salvation, it is commanded of all that believe in Jesus Christ as an overt demonstration of their faith in Him. Acts 2:38
- E. Salvation comes strictly through faith in Christ; water baptism is simply an overt ritual that indicates that you are now in union with Christ.
  1. It is an overt representation of the baptism by the Holy Spirit, which places us in union with Christ at the point of faith in Him. Rom. 6:3-5
  2. This baptism is non-experiential; you did not experience anything in a physical way when this happened. ICor. 12:13
  3. It is a picture of the fact that you have accepted His work by faith, and are identified with Him, past, present, and future.
  4. This is an overt representation of retroactive and current positional truth.
- F. Submission to water baptism is part of having a good conscience. IPet. 3:21

