



**22 QUESTIONS  
ABOUT  
WATER  
BAPTISM**

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## A. INTRODUCTION

Some topics in the Bible are more difficult to understand than others. Even Peter said that what Paul wrote was sometimes difficult to understand.

### 2 PETER 3:16.

"As also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things; in which are some things hard to be understood, which they that are unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other scriptures, unto their own destruction."

Yet it must be taken for granted that things concerning the plan of salvation should be the easiest to understand. The theme of water baptism is mentioned many times in the New Testament. It is closely connected to the plan of redemption. The instructions regarding this sacred ordinance are very specific. So it is really surprising that this topic is largely misunderstood in many respects. There are many different views that are not close to what the Bible says about it, but there are 8 that stand out that raise many questions.

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## 1. DID WATER BAPTISM EXPIRED?

There are those who teach that although water baptism played a major role in the beginning of the church during the first century, it has finally become obsolete and is not relevant today. An Anglican minister named E. W. Bullinger (1837 - 1913) developed a doctrine that became known as "**ultra-dispensationalism**". This doctrine taught that water baptism of the New Testament was a Jewish ceremonial ritual and was part of the law of Moses. Furthermore, he teach that the law of Moses was not replaced before the end of the book of Acts. How then does one explain the different references to baptism in, for example, the following two scriptures. (There are many more).

### ROMANS 6: 3-4.

"Or do you not know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We are therefore buried with Him through baptism into death, so that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. "

### DAWID GUZIK ENDURING WORD COMMENTARY

Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father:

c. 6

The believer's water baptism (or, being baptized into Christ) is a dramatization or "*acting out*" of the believer's "*immersion*" or identification with Jesus in His death and resurrection.

**Bruce**

"From this and other references to baptism in Paul's writings, it is plain that he did not regard baptism as an 'optional extra' in the Christian life."

**GALATIANS 3:27.**

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

To get out of this dilemma, they claim that these verses refer to the "*spiritual baptism*" that happens as soon as the person places his faith in Christ. These verses therefore have nothing to do with water.

**First;** the law of Moses was cancelled by the cross of Christ, not at the end of the book of Acts, which only took place in the late first century AD.

**EPHESIANS 2:15-16.**

"Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:"

The water baptism mentioned in the book of Acts is not a Jewish tradition.

**Second;** the clearest refutation of this unbiblical idea is found in Matthew's version of the Great Commission. In this report the Lord requires of His followers the following.

### MATTHEW 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:"

### APOSTOLIC BIBLE POLYGLOT WITH STRONGS NUMBERS

"Going<sup>G4198</sup> then,<sup>G3767</sup> disciple<sup>G3100</sup> all<sup>G3956</sup>  
 the<sup>G3588</sup> nations!<sup>G1484</sup> immersing<sup>G907</sup> them<sup>G1473</sup>  
 in<sup>G1519</sup> the<sup>G3588</sup> name<sup>G3686</sup> of the<sup>G3588</sup>  
 father,<sup>G3962</sup> and<sup>G2532</sup> of the<sup>G3588</sup> son,<sup>G5207</sup>  
 and<sup>G2532</sup> of the<sup>G3588</sup> holy<sup>G39</sup> spirit.<sup>G4151</sup>"

We see two important facts in this passage.

1. The word "**baptism**" is a clear reference to water baptism because it is administered by man. "**Spiritual baptism**" is not practised by man.

### MATTHEW 3:11.

"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:"

**2.** Included in this commandment is a promise that the Lord will always, until the end of the world, be with those who carry out this commandment. In other words, the water baptism referred to here is therefore a permanent part of the Christian system. We must also consider the following: If there was no water baptism today, then it was impossible to enter the kingdom of God, because one enters the Kingdom of God through baptism.

### 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."

### 1 CORINTHIANS 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."

The **"ultra-dispensationalism"** view of baptism is completely the opposite than the teaching of the New Testament.

## 2. IS BAPTISM ALSO FOR BABIES AND YOUNG CHILDREN.

Another common misconception associated with baptism is that it can be administered to infants and young children. It is stated that baptism symbolically referred to circumcision. The following text is then used to support this statement.

### COLLOSIANS 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."

Now it is said that seeing that circumcision was administered to infants, baptism can also be administered to infants.

There are several major flaws with this view.

**1.** If circumcision is the type of baptism as argued by the proponents of infant baptism, then only the boys should be baptised, because circumcision was only ministered to the boys in the Old Testament.

**2.** The only comparison between circumcision and baptism is found in the above scripture with the words; "in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh". Circumcision literally lays the flesh down. In baptism, however, it is a spiritual event where the believer lays down the old man - **the flesh**. This is the only similarity between the two.

**3.** Seeing that baptism is for "**forgiveness of sins**", it is not right to baptise infants, because they have no sin.

### ACTS 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."

### WILLIAMS TRANSLATION

"Peter said to them, "You must repent -- and, as an expression of it, let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ -- that you may have your sins forgiven; and then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,"

### MATTHEW 18: 3.

"And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven."

1 CORINTHIANS 14:20.

"Brethren, be not children in understanding: howbeit in malice be ye children, but in understanding be men."

*Infant baptism is unknown in the New Testament.  
It's like a Luthren theologian confessing J.L.Jacobi:  
"Infant baptism was established neither by Christ nor  
the apostles."*

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### 3. IS SPRINKLING A VALID METHOD OF BAPTISM?

It is well known that many religious groups do not use immersion in the ministry of baptism. Rather than immersion, they use sprinkling or pouring water over the baptist's head. However, the above procedures ignore the following. The Greek word "**baptizō**" "**bapto**" means "**immerse**" nothing else.

**baptizō**

**bap-tid'-zo**

From a derivative of *G911*; to make whelmed (that is, fully wet); used only (in the New Testament) of ceremonial ablution, especially (technically) of the ordinance of Christian baptism: - baptist, baptize, wash.

In some parts the word is translated as "**dip**".

**βάπτω**

**baptō bap'-to**

A primary verb; to whelm, that is, cover wholly with a fluid; in the New Testament only in a qualified or specific sense, that is, (literally) to moisten (a part of one's person), or (by implication) to stain (as with dye): - dip.

LUKE 16:24.KJV WITH STRONGS

AndG2532 heG846 criedG5455 and said,G2036 FatherG3962 Abraham,G11 have mercyG1653 on me,G3165 andG2532 sendG3992 Lazarus,G2976 thatG2443 he may dipG911 theG3588 tipG206 of hisG848 fingerG1147 in water,G5204 andG2532 coolG2711 myG3450 tongue;G1100 forG3754 I am tormentedG3600 inG1722 thisG5026 flame.G5395

JOHN 13:26.KJV WITH STRONGS

JesusG2424 answered,G611 HeG1565 it is,G2076 to whomG3739 IIG1473 shall giveG1929 a sop,G5596 when I have dippedG911 it. AndG2532 when he had dippedG1686 theG3588 sop,G5596 he gaveG1325 it to JudasG2455 Iscariot,G2469 the son of Simon.G4613

The New Testament makes it very clear that baptism includes a burial and a resurrection.

ROMANS 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."

COLLOSSIANS 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."

Pouring water and sprinkling do not require these two ingredients.

### PREACHER'S HOMILETICAL COMMENTARY

*Col\_2:12. Buried ... risen.—Referring to the definite acts when, as Christian converts, they went beneath the baptismal waters and emerged to live the faith thus publicly confessed. Through the faith of the operation of God.—An obscure phrase. The R.V. is clear: "Through faith in the working of God."*

Furthermore, history points out that sprinkling and pouring over water is a "**post-Apostolic**" invention.

**The Historian "Mosheim" states that baptism in the first century:**

"Was performed by an immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font"

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## 4. BAPTISM IS JUST A SYMBOL OF SALVATION.

This is a general view of the denominations.

**"Baptism is a mere symbol of salvation. It is an outward sign of an inward grace."**

They use the following scripture to support this view.

### 1 PETER 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:"

### LEXHAM ENGLISH BIBLE

"And also, corresponding to this, baptism now saves you, not the removal of dirt from the flesh, but an appeal to God for a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,"

The Baptist writer B.H.Carrol in his commentary on this verse, declares the following;

**"Saves us in a figure, not reality"**

However, there is no support for it in the New Testament.

**First;** the Bible teaches that baptism is for the remission of sins.

**ACTS 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."

The Bible teaches that baptism washes our sins away.

**ACTS 22:16.**

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

The Bible teaches that baptism places us in Christ.

**ROMANS 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."

**GALATIANS 3:27**

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

**Second;** in every New Testament passage where baptism and salvation are mentioned together, baptism comes before salvation.

MARK 16:16.

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

ACTS 2:38.

"And 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."

1 PETER 3:21.

"Of which the image, the baptism, now also saves us, not as an outpouring of the filthiness of the flesh, but as a prayer to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

**Thirdly:** 1 Peter 3:21 does not say that baptism only saves us spiritually. The message of this verse is clear. Noah and his family were saved by water. They were carried by water while a sinful world perished among them. They were, as it were, taken to a clean environment by the support of "**water**" from the sinful world. This is a type of our rebirth. Through baptism we are transported from darkness to light.

**Dr. Robert Stein, a Baptist scholar, recently said;**  
 "At times salvation is said to come about through baptism. Here once again we can mention 1 Peter 3:21, where baptism is clearly said to save.

*The only way that we can separate baptism from salvation in this statement is by attributing to the word baptism a meaning different from which it usually bears"*

*Thus, any attempt to spiritualize the words of 1 Peter 3:21 drowns in the flood waters to which it refers.*

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## 5. IS BAPTISM A WORK OF HUMAN MERITS?

Yet another error is that baptism is seen as a work and because we live in grace, baptism is obsolete.

### EPHESIANS 2: 8-9.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

They believe that seeing that all are saved by grace and not by works, baptism is excluded because they are works.

**First:** baptism is a divine command.

### MATTHEW 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:"

### PREACHER'S HOMILETICAL COMMENTARY

Mat\_28:19. In the name.—Into the name (R.V.). The difference is considerable. "**In the name**" might imply that baptism was to be administered by church ministers acting in the name of the Almighty. "**Into the name**" means that converts are pledged by baptism to a faith which has for its object the Being designated by that name, and which brings them into union with Him.

To classify baptism as a work of men on the basis of what is said in Ephesians is a great error.

**Second:** if baptism is a work of man, then those who believe that baptism is "for the remission of sins" have placed their trust in the wrong saviour and are therefore still lost. So no one can kindly say: "We believe you are wrong about baptism, but we still accept you as a brother in Christ." This is total nonsense!

**Thirdly:** the New Testament clearly states that baptism is not according to human works or merits. Paul declares that we are not saved by works or human righteousness, but we are saved by the "bath of rebirth" baptism.

### TITUS 3: 5.

"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;"

### PULPIT COMMENTARY

Through the washing of regeneration (δια τὸ λουτροῦ παλλιγενεσίας). Here we have the means through or by which God's mercy saves us. The washing or rather laver of regeneration (λουτρόν)—found elsewhere in the New Testament only in Eph\_5:26, in exactly the same connection—is the laver or bath in which the washing takes place.

The nature or quality of this bath is described by the words, "**of regeneration**" (*τη<sup>ῦ</sup> σ παλιγγενεσίας*); elsewhere in the New Testament only in Mat\_19:28, where it seems rather to mean the great restoration of humanity at the second advent. The word is used by Cicero of his restoration to political power, by Josephus of the restoration of the Jews under Zerubbabel, and by several Greek authors; and the LXX. of Job\_14:14 have the phrase, *ε<sup>ὖ</sup> ὡς πάλιν γένωμαι*, but in what sense is not quite clear, *Παλιγγενεσία*, therefore, very fifty describes the new birth in holy baptism, when the believer is put into possession of a new spiritual life, a new nature, and a new inheritance of glory. And the laver of baptism is called "**the laver of regeneration**," because it is the ordained means by or through which regeneration is obtained.

To put it bluntly, human works of merit and water baptism are not in the same category. When one comes out of baptismal water it is a work of God.

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## 6. SHOULD BAPTISM BE SERVED IN THE NAME OF JESUS ONLY?

The preachers of the "oneness" doctrine argue that the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit are the same person and are called "Jesus". It is therefore automatically seen that baptism is administered in the Name of Jesus Christ. If it is not done in the name of Jesus, then it is not valid. The Bible has no prescribed method in any scripture. Matthew connects baptism to the words "**the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit**". However, this is not necessarily a prescription of a baptismal form. The Lord simply says that when someone is immersed, he enters into a relationship with the Trinity. The word "**name**" does not refer to a specific name, but refers to the authority of those involved here. All the scriptures where the word "**name**" is used in relation to baptism only refer to the fact that it must be done with the "**authority**" of Jesus Christ.

### COLLOSIANS 3:17.

"Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord."

*Should we use a formula here too or are we simply doing what is right? Is it so difficult to understand that when we are told to do anything in the name of Jesus there is no commandment to cling to a formula? Why should we now tie it to baptism?*

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## 7. IS IT NECESSARY TO UNDERSTAND THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM BEFORE ONE IS BAPTIZED?

The argument is increasingly raised that it is only necessary to "obey God" even if the baptised do not understand baptism. In other words, it does not matter if someone was not baptised for "the forgiveness of sins," as long as they had a good motive. This is a wrong view of such a great matter for the following reasons;

1. If understanding the purpose of baptism is not necessary, then why is the purpose of baptism always part of the commission?
2. If it is necessary to understand that Jesus died for the forgiveness of sins;

### MATTHEW 26:28.

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Why is it not understandable that you should be baptised for the same reason?

### ACTS 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."

3. If "obedience to God" is the only criterion by which baptism is valid in human life, are all baptised people automatically saved? If that is true, we can all just baptise without preaching the gospel.

4. When we say "obedient from the heart," does it not imply that it includes a true understanding of the gospel?

### ROMANS 6:17.

"But God be thanked, that ye were the servants of sin, but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you."

### MATTHEW 13:15.

"For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Baptism is a very serious matter. Every person who truly loves the Lord must make sure that he understands this matter correctly and is not deceived by strange teachings.

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## 8. A DIFFERENCE ON THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM.

Although most baptismal verses link baptism to salvation, there are verses that refer to faith and are not linked to baptism. They are the following;

### EPHESIANS 2: 8.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:"

### ROMANS 3: 22-27.

"Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus. Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith."

There are other scriptures as well, but these are sufficient to be mentioned now. While it is true that the above scriptures do not mention baptism, neither does it mention repentance. Should we now conclude that repentance is no longer necessary for salvation? Of course not. It is very rare that any matter in the Bible is based on just one verse. It is the whole that counts, not just an isolated verse, that places a limited claim on just a certain part.

### PSALM 119: 160

"The whole content of your word is truth, and all your righteous ordinances are forever."

Acts 2:38 emphasizes "repentance" and "baptism" as requirements of "forgiveness" with no specific reference to "faith." Although through interpretation rules such as "the analogy of faith", faith in the Lord must be applied.

M.S.Terry in his book "Biblical Hermeneutics" says the following about "the analogy of faith".

"This principle assumes that the Bible is a self-interpreting book, and what is obscure in one passage may be illuminated by another. No single statement or obscure passage of one book can be allowed to set aside a doctrine which is clearly established by many passages"

For example, the fact that the Bible says that God is "one":

DEUTERONOMY 6: 4.

"Hear, O Israel, the LORD our God is one LORD."

Does not mean that the other truths in scripture contradict this verse, as the in:

MATTHEW 28: 19-20.

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

The fact that Detronomium says that God is "one" does not detract from the fact that God is also the "Trinity". A truth revealed in one text may be magnified by another text by providing additional information. This is one of the most important components of interpretation. While Ephesians 2: 8 refers to salvation by grace through faith, the author later confirmed in the same letter that we are cleansed by:

EPHESIANS 5:26.

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

WILLIAMS TRANSLATION

"to consecrate her, after cleansing her through His word, as pictured in the water bath,"

If one accepts that "**saved**" is the same as "**purify**" then one understands that salvation through "**faith and grace**" is not independent of "**washed with water**".

JAMIESON-FAUSSET AND BROUWN.

with the washing of water — rather as Greek, "**with**," or "**by the laver of the water**," namely, the baptismal water. So it ought to be translated in Tit\_3:5, the only other passage in the New Testament where it occurs. As the bride passed through a purifying bath before marriage, so the Church (compare Rev\_21:2). He speaks of baptism according to its high ideal and design, as if the inward grace accompanied the outward rite; hence he asserts of outward baptism whatever is involved in a believing appropriation of the divine truths it symbolizes, and says that Christ, by baptism, has purified the Church [Neander] (1Pe\_3:21). by the word — Greek, "**IN the word**." To be joined with "**cleansing it**," or "**her**." The "**word of faith**" (Rom\_10:8, Rom\_10:9, Rom\_10:17), of which confession is made in baptism, and which carries the real cleansing (Joh\_15:3; Joh\_17:17) and regenerating power (1Pe\_1:23; 1Pe\_3:21) [Alford].

So Augustine [Tract 80, in John], "Take away the word, and what is the water save water? Add the word to the element, and it becomes a sacrament, being itself as it were the visible word."

The regenerating efficacy of baptism is conveyed in, and by, the divine word alone. Ok we see that although both grace and faith are emphasized in Romans 3:22 as the method of salvation, the author goes three chapters further and confirms that if someone is buried in Christ he can walk in "**a new life**".

### ROMANS 6: 3-4.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

Is not "**a new life**" a very good description of salvation? Of course it is! It is therefore clear that salvation by grace and faith is not separate from the other conditions.

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## 9. WHAT ABOUT ROMANS 10:13?

We see in the book of Acts after describing the great and transparent day of the Lord, the following words.

### ACTS 2:21.

"And whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved."

The question now is; to what does the "**call**" of the name of the Lord refer? It can not only be superficial "**Lord Lord**", because the Lord rebukes those who go as far as "**calling**".

### MATTHEW 7:21.

"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven."

### LUKE 6:46.

"And why call ye me, Lord, Lord? and do not do what I say? "

It is clear from a comparison of verse 21 with the information we find later in the same chapter that the "**call**" must be seen in a comprehensive sense. Now we ask; Is the "**saved**" the same as "**forgiveness of sins**" in verse 38? **Yes it definitely is!** The blessing is the same.

Seeing that there is no alternative plan of salvation for the sinner, it becomes clear that the "**call**" includes "**repentance and baptism**" of the later passage in the same chapter. So to suggest that the verse excludes or cancels the other requirements to act dangerously foolish with your own salvation.

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## 10. WHAT ABOUT SAGGEUS AND THE THIEF ON THE CROSS?

### LUKE 19: 9.

"Then said Jesus unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, for this man also is a son of Abraham."

Salvation is referred to here and baptism is not mentioned here at all.

### LUKE 23:43.

"And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise."

Here Jesus is on the cross in conversation with one of the robbers who was also on a cross. The robber confessed his faith in Christ and Jesus rewarded it with the words in verse 43. Although one can argue that Zacchaeus and his house were baptised at some point, this is not the case with the robber on the cross. He was certainly not baptised. We see the following points; Neither Zacchaeus nor the robber on the cross was asked to repent. Can we then assume that repentance is not necessary? We need to keep in mind the place and context of the topic. The time that both of these events took place is important because it determines the context.

Neither of the two was under the obligation of the New Covenant at that time, for events of the cross had not yet been completed. The requirements of the New Covenant only came into effect on the day of Pentecost. Both Zacchaeus and the robber lived in a transitional period when the law of Moses was still in force. At the same time, John the Baptist began his ministry. It had been a unique time. John ministered the baptism of "**forgiveness of sins**" and large crowds were baptised by him.

### MARK 1: 4.

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

### MATTHEW 3: 5-6.

"Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins."

It cannot be determined whether one or both of them were exposed to the ministry of John, and were baptised by him at one time or another. It is very possible that they were baptised and then fell back into their old ways. What we do know is that those who did listen to John and ignored his baptism rejected the counsel of God.

LUKE 7:30.

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

Now follows an interesting question; if those who rejected John's baptism were rejected by God, how much more so those who rejected the baptism commanded by Jesus?

During the days of His public ministry, Christ had the ability to forgive sins, independent of the ritual of baptism.

MARK 2: 5-10.

"When Jesus saw their faith, he said unto the sick of the palsy, Son, thy sins be forgiven thee. But there were certain of the scribes sitting there, and reasoning in their hearts, Why doth this man thus speak blasphemies? who can forgive sins but God only? And immediately when Jesus perceived in his spirit that they so reasoned within themselves, he said unto them, Why reason ye these things in your hearts? Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palsy, Thy sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and take up thy bed, and walk? But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy.)"

After the crucifixion of Christ, His will and Testament came into force and were pinned down in the New Covenant.

### HEBREWS 9: 15-17.

"And for this cause he is the mediator of a new testament, that, while a death has taken place for the redemption of the transgressions of the first testament, those who are called may receive the promise of eternal inheritance. For where there is a will, the death of the testator must be announced; because a will is valid in the event of death, as it is never valid as long as the testator is still alive."

The Savior's "**will**" is now obligatory through the written code. That "**will**" now requires immersion as "**forgiveness of sins**" as in Acts 2:38. No one has the right to argue that it can take place in any other way. There is no example in the book of Acts of salvation without baptism. It is always made clear or implied that baptism is involved.

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## 11. THE QUESTION ON MARK 16:16.

### MARK 16:16.

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

Now the question is; the first part says "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" but the second part says "but he who does not believe will be condemned". This is a clear indication that "**faith**" is the main element of salvation.

1. Although faith is described as the "**main**" element in the process of salvation, because it is the motive from which all other actions arise, it is not correct to suggest that "**faith**" is the only element. Such an argument would also preclude the act of "**repentance**". Salvation is brought about by repentance and repentance of sin.
2. This verse declares that he who does not believe is lost, then it is not necessary to say anything further. Someone who does not believe will not be baptised either. Therefore, it is also foolish to discuss baptism with someone who does not believe.
3. The square truth is that Jesus unequivocally declares that "**He who believes and is baptized will be saved**". Faith and baptism are clearly followed by "**will be saved**". Thus, it means that the process of "**salvation**" was not completed before both actions were performed. This cannot be made clear.

PREACHER'S HOMILETICAL

Mar\_16: 16. He that believeth not. — Against heretics denying, from the omission in this latter clause, the necessity of baptism, it is sufficient to reply that baptism, if not a necessary means of grace, would not have been introduced as such, and without qualification, in the previous clause — to say nothing of the assertion of its necessity elsewhere (eg Joh\_3: 3). Nor, indeed, is the insistence on baptism really absent from this clause after all; although not verbally expressed, it is evidently implied; the previous conjunction of the two — faith and baptism — is such that to accept or deny one is to accept or deny both. Moreover, saving faith is practical, and includes the observance of all things enjoined, of which baptism is among the first.

PULPIT COMMENTS.

These words are very important. The first clause opposes the notion that faith alone is sufficient for salvation, without those works which are the fruit of faith. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; that is, he that believeth, and as an evidence of his faith accepts Christ's baptism, and fulfills the promises and vows which he then took upon himself, working out his own salvation with fear and trembling, shall be saved. But he that disbelieveth shall be condemned (ο δὲ ἀπιστήσας κατακριθήσεται,).

The condemnation anticipates the doom which will be incurred by continual unbelief. 4.J.W. Willmarth a very well known Baptist editor and writer said the following: ". . . our Saviour said, just before he ascended the heavens: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. We shall hardly dare to tamper with his royal word and make it run, He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized"

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## 12. IF BAPTISM WAS SO ESSENTIAL, WHY DIDN'T JESUS BAPTISM ANYONE?

The question is very sincere. We would assume that Jesus would be part of anything as important to human salvation as baptism.

### JOHN 4: 2.

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

Without the previous verse as context, this verse is not valid.

### JOHN 4: 1.

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

### Godet

Though (*καίτοι γε* = *howbeit, and yet*).—This word is intended to indicate a partial correction of the report recorded in Joh\_4:1 (vide also Joh\_3:22; Joh\_3:26).

"Why did not Jesus Himself baptise? Just because He was the Lord, and as such reserved to Himself the baptism of the Spirit. By leaving the baptism of water to the apostles, He rendered this rite independent of His personal presence, and so provided for the maintenance of it in His Church after His departure"

Jesus did not see this matter of baptism as something small, but as something important. Although He did not baptise people with His own hands, He was present when His disciples did so. He served baptism through them, as it were. Furthermore, there is also a good reason for it. As we know the nature of man, those who were personally baptised by Jesus will begin to see themselves as more highly regarded than those who were baptised by the disciples. So there is nothing in this text that indicates that baptism is not necessary.

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## 13. BE ARCHEOLOGY SHOWS THAT BAPTISM CAN BE SERVED BY SPRINKLING?

Those who practice the ritual of baptism as "**sprinkling**" as a substitute for "**immersion**" claim that the so-called "**infant baptism**" was already practised from the beginning of the church's existence. They claim that the method of baptism was from the beginning, or "**immersion**" or "**sprinkling**" or "**pouring**". They claim that ancient literary references, together with the archaeological discoveries, support this view. The question, however, is: will these allegations withstand the test of critical inquiry by scholars? First, we must point out that the expression "**sprinkling baptism**" is an oxymoron. Oxymoron is the practice of naming two opposite concepts together. For example, "**deafening silence**". The original term "**baptizo**" means "**impression, suppression, immersion**". In the Greek version of the Old Testament - the **Septuagint** - the related form of "**bapto**" is clearly distinguished from the terms "**sprinkle - rhantizo**" and "**pour - epiche**".

### SPRINKLE

ἐπιχέω

epicheō

ep-ee-kheh'-o From G1909 and χέω cheō (to pour); to pour upon: - pour in.

POUR  
 Hantes  
 rhantizō  
 hran-tid'-zo

From a derivative of *þaívw rhainō* (to sprinkle); to render besprinkled, that is, asperse (ceremonially or figuratively): - sprinkle.

LEVITICUS 14: 15-16.

"And the priest shall take some of the log of oil, and pour it into the palm of his own left hand: And the priest shall dip his right finger in the oil that is in his left hand, and shall sprinkle of the oil with his finger seven times before the LORD:"

It is therefore impossible to refer to the baptismal method and call it sprinkling. Sprinkling is not baptism, immersion is baptism. Other than that, there is not a single text in the New Testament that indicates that the act of "**baptism**" was served by "**sprinkling**" or "**pouring**" on someone's head. The theological connection between "**baptism**" and the burial and resurrection of Christ removes the idea that baptism by "**sprinkling or pouring**" could never take place.

The Lutheran historian John Mosheim states that: "Baptism was administered in this [the first] century, without public assemblies, in places appointed and prepared for that purpose, and was performed by an immersion of the whole body in the baptismal font" (p. 35).

It is therefore clear that evidence for this error must be sought outside the Bible.

### LITERARY HISTORY.

The cautious student of history will not hesitate to admit that a reversal of the biblical pattern of baptism took place quite early in church history. The first reference to a turning away from immersion is in a document called the "**Didache 120-160 AD**". It gives permission for pouring water on the head in an emergency. The first defence of "**sprinkling**" was by Cyprian 200-258nC. He was a writer in Carthage who allowed sprinkling as a substitute for immersion, but only when absolutely necessary. For example, during a serious illness (Epistle lxxv). The first specifically documented case of sprinkling involves a man named Novatian (250nC) who lived in Rome. Novatian was apparently on his deathbed and was sprinkled. However, this was a very unusual case. Eusebius of Caesarea (263-339nC), known as the father of church history, describes this event.

He writes that Novatian was subsequently prevented from becoming a church leader. Why was that? The reason was that it was not considered legal to administer baptism as:

**"Aspersion, as he was, should be promoted to the order of the clergy"** (Ecclesiastical History, VI.XLIII).

Even when the church was already in the position of apostasy on various matters, the Council of Nemours kept 1284nC at;

**"Limited sprinkling to cases of necessity."**

Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274), one of the most prominent Catholic theologians, acknowledged that "**immersion**" was the "**safer**" method, although he allowed "**sprinkling or pouring**".

It was only during the Council of Ravenna (1311 AD) that sprinkling was made official as an option for baptism. (Schaff, p. 201).

In the above, therefore, we can clearly see that the ancient records do not support the ideas of the proponents of sprinkling or pouring.

## ARCHEOLOGICAL EVIDENCE.

Much has been made over the centuries of the so-called archaeological evidence that so-called demonstrates that "**sprinkling**" was the acceptable method of baptism in the early church. Charles Bennett's work is particularly cited in this effort. (395-408) Professor Bennett, a Methodist scholar, argued that there was great freedom in the church when it came to the way of baptism. The method of baptism could be adapted as the circumstances required. Bennett's conclusion was based on certain discoveries of "**frescos**" (paintings done on fresh plaster) in the ancient catacombs (underground tunnels) near the city of Rome. However, an evaluation of this evidence demonstrates that it falls far short of proving any case. The oldest examples that Bennett presents are classified as "**before Constantine**" which possibly goes back as far as the second century. More recent studies have indicated that the oldest Christian catacombs date back as far as 150nC. (Free / Vos, p. 290).

However, there is no argument that it is a fact that the deviation from "**immersion**" to "**sprinkling**" and "**pouring**" took place as early as the middle of the second century. (Didache, 7). However, this is not New Testament evidence. What we must also remember is that errors have already taken place in the time of the Apostles.

## GALATIANS 1: 6-7.

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ."

Even in those earliest directions (depicted in Bennett's works) there are many differences of opinion as to what these paintings represent. There is in no case with concrete evidence of sprinkling or pouring. The graphic images only show a baptismal candidate standing in the water while another person is standing on the shore.

Professor Coborn, referring to Schaff, says the following;

"the very oldest picture represents the new convert as 'coming up after immersion from the river which reaches over his knees' ..." (p. 400).

Schaff a **"pedobaptist"** goes on to suggest, based on the quote in the Didache, that immersion can be replaced by the irrigation of water. His argument, however, is pure speculation because the artworks themselves give no suggestion of it.

Perhaps the oldest and best-preserved representation of the **"baptism"** of Christ (depicting John pouring water over Jesus' head) is a mosaic of a baptismal font in Ravenna, known as San Giovanni. However, this artwork dates to the middle of the 5th century AD, far from the time of the Apostles.

Even Professor Bennett confesses that this mosaic also has the symbol of the Jordan's "river god". It therefore has a mixed pagan ancestry. This can not really be an honest representation of true Christianity. In an article published two centuries ago, Dr. George E. Rice, assistant professor of New Testament studies at Andrews University Theological Seminary, argues that the archaeological evidence overwhelmingly testifies that "immersion" was the common practice of baptism during the first 10 to 14 centuries of the Christian era. This fact is irrefutable. The claim that discoveries within the Roman catacombs provide evidence for the use of "sprinkling and pouring" as a form of baptism was born more out of a desire to say so than to say so.

### **R.C. Sometimes foster it up beautifully.**

"The catacomb evidence has been the subject of much controversy. De Rossi tried to use the inscriptions and pictures to establish the teachings and claims of the Roman Catholic Church. He was vigorously answered by the archaeologist Schultze. Various attempts have been made by pedobaptists to use the catacomb pictures as proof that the original action was sprinkling or pouring. But the very fact that the catacomb pictures are filled with heathen figures and conceptions intermingled with the Christian,

show that the simple faith had already begun to be corrupted, and that too much weight can not be attached to pictures which combine the Good Shepherd with flying genii, heads of the seasons, doves, peacocks, vases, fruits and flowers" (p. 22).

There is simply no evidence, Bibles or any other way that the original Christians - under the leadership of inspired leaders - had the practice of using "**sprinkling**" as a form of baptism. Sprinkling is a departure from the New Testament pattern and should be rejected by all who want to obey God's will in their lives.

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## 14. MARK 16:16 INCLUDES WATER BAPTISM?

To answer this, we must first look again at the so-called "**great commission**" in Mark and Matthew.

### MARK 16: 15-16.

"And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

### Mat 28: 18-20.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 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."

It is generally accepted that the "**great commission**" found in Mark is also repeated in Matthew. It is therefore important that we thoroughly examine the language used by Matthew in this account.

The Lord instructs His disciples in verse 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:"

The word "**baptizing**" indicates the manner in which it was baptised. This would be done by the disciples who make disciples and then those disciples will make disciples and baptise them and it will continue to come to Christ. Thus the baptism referred to in both Mark and Matthew is the physical water baptism administered to man by man. The fact is that unless it can be proved that a spiritual baptism is meant in Matthew 3:11; Luke 12:50; John 1:33; Acts 1: 5; Acts 11:16, water baptism is the baptism that is meant throughout the New Testament when the term "**baptism**" is used. The baptism of Mark 16:16 is associated with faith having salvation as a result. So if we can prove that there is a witness elsewhere in the New Testament that salvation is linked to baptism, then we can assume that the baptism in Mark 16:16 is really the physical water baptism. The connection of "**water**" and "**salvation**" is so obvious that one cannot miss it. Peter links water baptism to salvation.

1 PETER 3: 20-21.

"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. 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:"

DAWID GUZIK ENDURING WORD COMMENTS.

a. Eight souls, were saved through water: Peter draws a picture here. Even as Noah's salvation from judgment of God was connected with water, so the Christian's salvation connected with the water, the water of baptism. The water of the flood washed away sin and wickedness, and brought a new world with a fresh start before God. The water of baptism does the same thing, providing a passage from the old to the new. b. Not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God: But Peter is careful to point out that it is not the actual water washing of baptism that saves us, but the spiritual reality behind the immersion in water. What really saves us is the answer of a good conscience toward God, a conscience made good through the completed work of Jesus.

The final fact is that virtually the entire biblical composition of scholars and commentaries sees the baptism of Mark 16:16 as the physical water baptism. The matter is so clear, that there is not even a debate among the theological scholars about it.

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## 15. DOES THE REQUIREMENT OF BAPTISM NOT COMPROMISE THE INVERSIBILITY OF GOD?

**The question is asked:** Believers are expected to be baptised now in the New Testament, but they were not expected to be baptised in the Old Testament, is that not an indication that God has "**changed**"? Is it not then in conflict with the doctrine of God's "**immutability**"? To answer this question, we must first look at what the scholars mean by the "**immutability**" of God. The word "**immutability**" does not mean that God has never changed, associated with His dealings with the universe and man. The Lord has programmed the seasons in such a way that they undergo change. Sowing time and harvest time; cold and heat; summer and winter; day and night.

### GENESIS 8:22.

"While the earth remaineth, seedtime and harvest, and cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night shall not cease."

He allows living beings to change. From young to old; from living to death. Without change and constant with the will of God, life would have been a tragic monotony. Furthermore, when Teloe and scholars speak of the "**immutability**" of God, they are referring to His immutable nature.

His existence, His moral qualities never change. God cannot become wiser, nor better than He is. With God there is no change.

**JAMES 1:17.**

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

**MALACHI 3: 6.**

"For I am the LORD, I change not; therefore ye sons of Jacob are not consumed."

In the overall scheme of things, His plan for man, He does not change. His plan has always been that sinners will come to Him for forgiveness. However, there is an important concept. The fact that God does not change does not negate the fact that He will carry out His plan for man's salvation, and that plan requires change as it goes on. Not the change of God, but God bringing about change in His plan.

**PSALM 102: 26-28.**

"In the past you laid the foundations of the earth, and the heavens are the work of your hands. They will perish, but you will remain; yea, all of them shall wax old like a garment; You change them like a garment, and they disappear. But You remain the same, and Your years have no end."

This Psalm confirms that even though God does not change, He does bring about change. So to refer to the "**immutability**" of God in order to change the clear teaching of the New Testament in connection with the baptism in water for the forgiveness of sins is ridiculous at best. This error can easily be proven further than false if one looks at the following: If God, because of His "**immutability**", can never change His method of working, then there must be no written revelation of His will today.

- 1.** In the Pariagale era of human history, that is, from Adam to Moses, there was no written law. Such circumstances must have been permanent if the "**immutability**" of God covered all aspects of being God.
- 2.** In the days of Moses, God gave a written law that applied only to the people of Israel. The Hebrews of that time.

### DEUTERONOMY 5: 1.

"And Moses called all Israel, and said unto them, Hear, O Israel, the statutes and judgments which I speak in your ears this day; you must learn it and keep it carefully."

If the Lord never changed His methods, then no heathen had access to a knowledge of heaven. We would therefore have had nothing more than the witness of our consciousness.

3. The Jews worship in a temple in Jerusalem and offer bloody sacrifices; if that system could never be changed or replaced, then man would have been obliged to make similar sacrifices today as well. The fact is, however, that the system has changed.

### HEBREWS 7:12.

"For the priesthood being changed, there is made of necessity a change also of the law."

The fact of the matter, however, is; God reveals Himself progressively through the history of man, from the abstract, nature, to the full revelation of the New Testament. As this revelation grows, God has adapted these methods for man to the last change - Jesus Christ. His grand plan, despite essential changes, will eventually reach its final crescendo. It was not that God tried different plans until He found the perfect plan. The perfect plan was already prepared before the foundation of the world. It just took time to bring it to maturity. We therefore see that the "**immutability**" of God was never in jeopardy.

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## 16. IS A WORD FORMULA NEEDED AT THE MINISTRY OF BAPTISM.

The "**Jesus Only**" people claim that the baptismal formula, if we can put it that way, in Matthew 28, is no longer valid today. They reckon that from the day of Pentecost and beyond we use the name Jesus alone.

### MATTHEW 28: 18-20.

"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 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."

There are various things that can be said in response to this invalid assumption. Most believers who believe in the "**baptism of the believer**" believe that there is a "**word formula**". In other words, something must be said at baptism. We might deduce this from two occasions in Acts. The first is where Paul asks some disciples what baptism they were baptised with because they did not know about the Holy Spirit.

ACTS 19: 1-5.

"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, 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. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 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. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

We can assume here that something of the Holy Spirit was said during baptism, but that's all. We can also make a assumption when Annias told Paul to have him baptised.

ACTS 22:16.

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

Again, this is just a assumption. The only words were when Paul called on the Lord. It is irresponsible to assume that Christ would command His apostles to give the "**formula**" of "baptizing them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,"

and then to accept that they did not do so at all. and if we do what Christ commanded in Matthew, we are wrong. Did Christ command His disciples to "baptize them in the Name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"? Yes He has! Did the Apostels obey Him? We can safely assume that they obeyed Him. So, if they obeyed Him, should not we? We may also ask whether this commandment only applied to the period between Jesus' ascension and the day of Pentecost? How many people were baptised by the Apostels at that time seeing that they were commanded to stay in Jerusalem and wait until they were afflicted with power from above.

### ACTS 1:4-5.

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

### MATTHEW 28:20.

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

The words in verse 20 indicate that this was not a temporary commission, but a permanent one. Although it is the practice to use these words of Jesus when we administer baptism, it has much more depth than just a "word formula" during baptism. The above formula has from primitive times been considered indispensable for the valid administration of this sacrament. "From this sacred form of baptism," says Bishop Pearson, "did the Church derive the rule of faith, requiring the profession of belief in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, before they could be baptized in their Name" ('On the Creed, 'art. 1.).

There is no clear statement anywhere in the Bible that we should have a word formula that contains the same wording every time. Each text indicates what needs to be done with a small difference in where the emphasis falls. It all depends on the grammar of the text. It is therefore very striking that no exact "grammar of words" is used during the baptismal ceremony. The texts associated with baptism differ from one another in the original language.

**Mat 28:19** uses the word "claim" for "in".

**LUKE 24:47** uses the word "epi" for "in".

**ACTS 2:38** uses the word "eis" for "in."

**ACTS 2:16** uses the word "eis" for "in."

**ACTS 8:16** uses the word "eis" for "in."

**ACTS 10:48** uses the word "and" for "in".

**ACTS 19:5** uses the word "eiseis" for "in".

If we assume that the New Testament is inspired by the Spirit of the Lord (and it is), then we can assume that there are no contradictions in the New Testament. So there is no conflict between all these texts. The texts only look at the relationship of baptism with the Deity from different points of view.

"In none of these texts is a" word formula "being prescribed" (see J. H. Thayer's discussion of "name," p. 447).

**This situation is nicely summed up by Harold Mare and Hobart Freeman.**

"The meaning of baptism in the name of Jesus varies slightly according to the Greek preposition used. In Acts 2:38 Peter exhorted the Jews to repent and be baptized in or upon (epi) the name of Jesus Christ, resting upon His authority and being devoted to Him. Later Peter instructed Cornelius to be baptized in (en) the name of Jesus Christ, acting on His authority [Acts 10:48]. Three passages use eis (Mt. 28:19; Acts 8:16; 19: 5) plus the parallel phrase 'baptized into Christ' (Rom. 6: 3; Gal. 3:27).

A study of these verses along with the verb baptizo and eis in 1 Cor. 1:13; 10: 2; 12:13 indicates that the one baptized is identified with Christ (or Paul or Moses) and passes into new ownership or partnership with Him, with new loyalty and fellowship" (1176).

The fact of the matter is that when a person is baptised in the name of Jesus, it means that he is being baptised by the authority of Jesus Christ. This automatically means that this baptism was also done under the authority of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit. Jesus is not independent of the Deity. We therefore see that both the verses in Matthew and Acts do not refer to a "**word formula**", they do refer to the purpose of baptism. Further; the expression "**in the name of**" is represented by a "**verbal**" action that requires the specific words to be used, then one must use the phrase verbally and aloud every time something is done. So says Paul.

### COLOSSIANS 3:17.

"And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him."

This command by Paul is binding but it requires no verbal repetition. When we do something then it must be under the authority of the Triune God and not our own authority and ideas.

## 17. WHAT MEANS 1 PETER 3:21.

This verse suggests that salvation takes place before baptism. The words "pray to God for a good conscience" indicate a clear conscience before baptism. Do we not place too much emphasis on baptism?

### 1 PETER 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:"

If we could prove that a clear conscience refers to salvation then it does not cancel baptism by immersion. We know, however, that a clear conscience is not necessarily proof of salvation. Saul of Tarsus had a good conscience when he persecuted the Christians.

### ACTS 23: 1.

"And Paul, earnestly beholding the council, said, Men and brethren, I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day."

Yet in spite of the so-called "good conscience" he was unsaved. We can also see the term "good conscience" as equal to "sincere heart" when someone sincerely seeks the Lord. To see the term "good conscience" as salvation is a contradiction in the verse itself. The apostle has already said that baptism saves us.

Of course, he does not mean that there is some miracle remedy in the water itself. Man is saved by the blood of Jesus Christ and not water.

MATTHEW 26:28.

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

EPHESIANS 1: 7.

"In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"

This refers to in baptism the blood is spiritually connected with the believer's obedience to the command of the Lord. Baptism connects us spiritually to the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

ROMANS 6: 3-4.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

JOHN GILL'S EXPOSITION OF THE BIBLE.

Know ye not that so many of us as, You must know this, you cannot be ignorant of it, that whoever were baptized into Jesus Christ, were baptized into his death: and therefore must be dead to sin, and consequently ought not to live, nor can they live in sin. This does not suppose, that some of this church were baptized persons, and others not; but that some might be baptized in water who were not baptized into Christ: there is a difference between being baptized in water in the name of Christ, and being baptized into Christ, which believers in their baptism are; by which is meant, not a being brought by it into union with Christ, which is either secretly from eternity, or openly at conversion, and both before the baptism of true believers; nor a being brought by it into the mystical body of Christ the church, for this also is before it; but rather it designs a being baptized, or a being brought by baptism into more communion with Christ, into a participation of his grace and benefits; or into the doctrine of Christ, and a more distinct knowledge of it: the power of which they feel upon their hearts, and so have really believed in Christ, heartily love him, and make a sincere profession of him; though rather the true meaning of the phrase "**baptized into Christ**", I take to be, is to be baptised purely for the sake of Christ, in imitation of him, who has set us an example, and because baptism is an ordinance of his;

it is to submit to it with a view to his glory, to testify our affection for him, and subjection to him, without laying any stress or dependence on it for salvation; such who are thus baptised, are "**baptised into his death**": they not only resemble Christ in his sufferings and death, by being immersed in water, but they declare their faith in the death of Christ, and also share in the benefits of his death: such as peace, pardon, righteousness, and atonement: now this proves, that such persons are dead to sin, who are so baptized; for by the death of Christ, into which they are baptized, they are justified from sin; by the death of Christ, their old man is crucified, and the body of sin destroyed; besides, believers in baptism profess themselves to be dead to sin and the world, and their baptism is an obligation upon them to live unto righteousness.

### COLOSSIANSS 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."

### GODS WORD TRANSLATION.

"This happened when you were placed in the tomb with Christ through baptism. In baptism you were also brought back to life with Christ through faith in the power of God, who brought him back to life."

JOHN GILL'S EXPOSITION OF THE BIBLE.

Buried with him in baptism,.... The apostle goes on to observe how complete and perfect the saints are in Christ; that they are not only circumcised in him in a spiritual sense, and the body of the sins of their flesh is put off, and removed from them, in allusion to the cutting off and casting away of the foreskin in circumcision; but that they and all their sins were buried with Christ, of which their baptism in water was a lively representation: Christ having died for their sins, was laid in the grave, where he continued for a while, and then rose again; and as they were crucified with him, they were also buried with him, as their head and representative; and all their sins too, which he left behind him in the grave, signified by his grave clothes there; and baptism being performed by immersion, when the person baptized is covered with water, and as it were buried in it, is a very significant emblem of all this; it is a representation of the burial of Christ, and very fitly holds him forth to the view of faith in the state of the dead, in the grave, and points out the place where the Lord lay; and it is also a representation of our burial with him, as being dead to sin, to the law, and to the world, by him.

This shows now, that baptism was performed by dipping, or covering the whole body in water, for no other form of administration of baptism, as sprinkling, or pouring

water on the face, can represent a burial, or be called one; and this is what many learned interpreters own, and observe on this place: The view that "**good conscience**" refers to salvation is also contrary to other parts of the Bible where baptism is linked to salvation.

### TITUS 3: 5.

"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;"

### ACTS 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."

### THE WILLIAMS TRANSLATION.

"Peter said to them, "You must repent -- and, as an expression of it, let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ -- that you may have your sins forgiven; and then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit,"

### ACTS 22:16.

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

## JOHN GILL'S EXPOSITION OF THE BIBLE.

arise, and be baptised; this shows that Ananias was a Christian, since he directs to an ordinance of Christ, and that he was a preacher of the word, and had a right to administer baptism; for that it was administered by him, though not in express terms yet seems to be naturally concluded from Act 9:18 as also this passage shows, that baptism was not administered by sprinkling, since Saul might have sat still, and have had some water brought to him, and sprinkled on him; but by immersion, seeing he is called upon to arise, and go to some place proper and convenient for the administration of it, according to the usage of John, and the apostles of Christ. **"And wash away thy sins";** or **"be washed from thy sins";** not that it is in the power of man to cleanse himself from his sins; the Ethiopian may as soon change his skin, or the leopard his spots, as a creature do this; nor is there any such efficacy in baptism as to remove the filth of sin; persons may submit unto it, and yet be as Simon Magus was, in the gall of bitterness, and bond of iniquity;

But the ordinance of baptism, may be, and sometimes is, a means of leading the faith of God's children to the blood of Christ, which cleanses from all sin; Other scriptures may also be mentioned but I will suffice with the above. The Greek term translated in 1 Peter 3:21 with **"pray"** or **"answer"** is **"eperotema"**.

It basically means to "appeal" or make a "request". It is found only in this text of the New Testament, but it is in other parts of Greek literacy.

*J.H. Thayer says the following.*

*"Which (baptism) now saves us [you] not because in receiving it we [ye] have put away the filth of the flesh, but because we [ye] have earnestly sought a conscience reconciled to God" (1958, 230).*

*Arndt and Gingrich say the following about baptism:*

*"An appeal to God for a clear conscience" (1967, 285).*

*In "Kittel's Theological Dictionary" it says:*

*"Baptism does not confer physical cleansing but saves as a request for forgiveness" (1972, 262).*

*Charles B. Williams a respected Baptist scholar says; baptism is "the craving for a clear conscience toward God" (1966, 520).*

These versions therefore indicate that the **"good conscience"** is followed by baptism. So it is clear that if one is honest and careful 1 Peter 3:21. examine, that this scripture does not detach baptism from salvation. That baptism stands firm as forgiveness of sins is confirmed by this scripture.

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## 18. WHY WAS JESUS BAPTIZED?

The baptism of Jesus is mentioned only in 10 verses in the New Testament despite the fact that it is a momentary event in the history of man. This was the beginning of Jesus' public ministry. Why Jesus was baptised by John is clear in scripture, but we still want to know more. One thing is for sure; Jesus was not baptized by John in the normal scope of John's ministry. John baptised people who confessed their sins and wanted forgiveness. The purpose of John's baptism was therefore;

### MARK 1: 4.

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

Seeing that Jesus had no sin, it is clear that His baptism was a unique baptism. He did not approach John for forgiveness. There are those who argue that we are baptised for the same reason why Jesus was baptised. He was baptised because He was already a Son of God, and we are baptised because we are already children of the Lord. Such reasoning is erroneous for the following reasons.

**First;** it contradicts the simple testimony of Paul that we become children of God at our baptism into Christ.

**GALATIANS 3: 26-27.**

"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ."

**GODS WORD TRANSLATION.**

"You are all God's children by believing in Christ Jesus. Clearly, all of you who were baptized in Christ's name have clothed yourselves with Christ."

**Second;** if this argument is true, that we were baptised for the same reason that He was baptised, the reverse must also be true. Then Jesus was baptised for the same reason we are baptised before, namely the "**forgiveness of sins.**" Things equal to each other are also equal to the same things. Those who maintain the above view confess that they were baptised for the "**forgiveness of sins**" so it must be true in Jesus' case. This is a conclusion that would not be accepted by anyone. Except that in both cases obedience played a role, there is no similarity between our baptism and that of Jesus.

**MARK 16:16.**

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

There are three main reasons for the baptism of Jesus.

1. It was to identify Jesus as the Son of God at the beginning of His ministry.
2. It was an initial sign of the total commitment of Christ to complete His task.
3. It was a visual reference to Christ's death, burial and resurrection.

### **1. This is the Son of God!**

John the Baptist was a remarkable man. Isaiah calls him as follows;

#### **ISAIAH 40: 3.**

"A voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the LORD; make a highway for our God in the wilderness!"

The Old Testament closes with the words:

#### **MALACHI 4: 5-6.**

"Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he shall turn the heart of the fathers to the children, and the heart of the children to their fathers, lest I come and smite the land with a curse."

It was a reference to John the Baptist in a spiritual way, because he would prepare the way of Christ.

LUKE 1:17.

"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John announced Jesus as follows:

JOHN 1:29.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

The expression "**Lamb of God**" reveals that Christ was the fulfilment of the Old Testament sacrificial system. It refers to the reconciling nature of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection, and its possible acceptance, universally. John declares that it was his mission to prepare the way for the one who would come to him.

JOHN 1:30.

"This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me."

John is saying two things here that seem contradictory. "**After me**" and then "**before me**". What did he mean? The "**after me**" refers to Jesus who became man and the "**before me**" refers to His Deity who was.

John continues;

**JOHN 1:31.**

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

The words "**I did not know Him**" indicate that John was not absolutely certain that Jesus was the Messiah. He did not have the full revelation at that time.

**MATTHEW 3:14.**

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

He did not have a clear understanding at that moment, until he saw the Spirit descending on Him in the form of a dove, and heard the voice from heaven.

**MATTHEW 3:17.**

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

After this event, John the Baptist could say with certainty:

**JOHN 1:34.**

"And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."

So we see that one of the reasons for Jesus' baptism was so that John could make Himself known to the world.

## 2. An example of obedience.

### MATTHEW3:15.

"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."

I am sure we will never in this life understand the depth of this statement. What clearly emerges, however, is Jesus' obedience to the will of the Father. "Righteousness" is associated with the laws of God.

### PSALM 119: 172.

"My tongue shall speak of thy word: for all thy commandments are righteousness."

So when we fulfil righteousness it is obedience to God. The life of Jesus is a commentary on what obedience is. Jesus was confirmed by David a thousand years before His birth;

### PSALM 40: 8.

"I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my bowels."

It's one thing to do something against your will, and it's quite another to "rejoice" in what you do.

Again, while some have the Divine elements of the law in their heads, the question is, how much do those laws have in their hearts? Christ demonstrated by His baptism on the first day of His public ministry, that He was sold out to do the will of the Father. In this case, as in all others, He is our perfect model.

### **3. It was a foretaste of Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection.**

In his first letter to the Corinthians, Paul gives us the fundamental principles of the gospel.

#### **1 CORINTHIANS 15: 1-4.**

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand: By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"

The death of Jesus, as the main ingredient in the plan of salvation, was in the mind of God before the foundation of the world.

1 PETER 1: 19-20.

"But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot: Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you,"

Jesus himself, born as a human being, was below the normal growth of a human being in all respects. He therefore would not have known who He was from His birth. One could only speculate about when He became aware of His calling. It seems that at the age of 12 He already knew that He was the Son of God. However, we can be sure that by the time He was baptised by John, He was already fully aware of the fact that He was on His way to the cross. Possibly long before that. It is important that we look for a moment at the method of baptism. Those who advocate that baptism can also be done by "**sprinkling or pouring**" are totally contrary to the purpose and meaning of baptism. This is also contrary to the New Testament use of the word and also to early church history. The word "**baptizo**" means to immerse. Under no circumstances can this mean "**sprinkling or pouring**".

Baptism is clearly identified with a funeral.

**ROMANS 6: 3-4.**

"Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? When we were baptized into his death, we were placed into the tomb with him. As Christ was brought back from death to life by the glorious power of the Father, so we, too, should live a new kind of life."

**COLOSSIANS 2:12.**

"This happened when you were placed in the tomb with Christ through baptism. In baptism you were also brought back to life with Christ through faith in the power of God, who brought him back to life."

Sprinkling was first introduced in the 3rd century C, (Eusebius VI, XLIII). The practice only became the amplified position of the Roman Church in 1311 AD, when the council of Ravenna allowed one to make a choice between "**immersion**" and "**sprinkling or pouring**" (Schaff, 201).

It is therefore clear that the baptism of Jesus in the Jordan River refers to an underwater - a water burial. Then rising from the water indicates the resurrection from the grave. Mark specifically says that Jesus was baptised by John "**in**" the Jordan (eis) and then He came "**out**" of the water. (Greek - "I").

MARK 1: 9-10.

"And it came to pass in those days, that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water, he saw the heavens opened, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon him:"

Professor Blunt, a well-known scholar of the Church of England, admits that it is without any doubt that Jesus was immersed. So our question is; why is it so difficult for people to accept the method of baptism? It is so important in the Divine plan of salvation. If baptism had not been important, it would have become clear in the New Testament. However, this is very important because our baptism is linked to Jesus' baptism which was linked to the events of the cross. We may not understand all the reasons why Jesus was baptised because we have a limited view of this wonderful event. We must remember, however, that if the sinless Saviour of the world deemed it necessary to have Him baptised, how much more so, seeing that it has been declared the "**forgiveness of sins**" by Acts.

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## 19. EXCLUDE GRACE IN EPHESIANS BAPTISM.

In one of the outstanding statements about salvation, Paul writes down the following words in Ephesians.

### EPHESIANS 2: 8-9.

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

There are those who believe that this text clearly states that it is "**grace**" and "**grace**" alone that save us. Thus, baptism is completely set aside. But is that what the text implies? When we deal with this text alone apart from the rest of the plan of salvation, then we can form such an idea. However, should we read this verse in the context of salvation then we clearly see a different picture. To understand this verse we must understand the words. There are important terms that need to be clearly defined. Grace is a divine favour, given as a gift from Christ, independent of any own righteousness in man. Salvation refers to a divine release from guilt of sin. Although we still have to bear certain consequences of sin, we do not have to bear the wages of sin.

### ROMANS 6:23.

"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."

Salvation from the sins of the past, present and future takes place during the person's salvation and remains there as long as the person walks in the light.

### 1 JOHN 1: 7.

"But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin."

### THE WILLIAMS TRANSLATION.

"But if we continue to live in the light, just as He is in the light, we have unbroken fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son continues to cleanse us from every sin."

The phrase "**by faith**" reveals how merciful grace can be obtained by the sinner when he desires it. Faith is not just an acknowledgement of historical facts, nor is it just the position of trust. Although it contains both. Faith involves a response to whatever conditions there may be that are Divinely instituted. Salvation is not "**out of yourselves: it is the gift of God**" the words "**out**" is the word "**I**" emphasize that salvation can not come from any human effort or plan. **Why not?** For salvation is a gift from God. However, it is true that a gift can be conditional without undermining the benefactor's mercy. The ancient Israelites were "**given**" the city of Jericho, but it was not their intention until they complied with the Divine terms.

JOSHUA 6: 2.

"And the LORD said unto Joshua, See, I have given into thine hand Jericho, and his king, and the mighty men of valor."

JOSHUA 2:16.

And it came to pass, when the priests sounded the trumpets seven times, that Joshua said unto the people, Shout; for the LORD will give you the city."

HEBREWS 11:30.

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days."

ACTS 27:24.

"Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee."

God "**gave**" His Son as a sacrifice for the whole "**world**" but only those who "**accepted**" Him share in the price at Golgotha.

JOHN 3:16.

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

JOHN 1:12.

"But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name;"

It is one of the tragedies of our time that there are so many who use the "**grace**" of this verse separately from all the other parts of the plan of redemption. They boldly declare that this verse proves that grace is separate from baptism. Many also go so far as to say that it is no longer necessary to repent and confess your sins.

ACTS 17:30.

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent;"

The following examples clearly illustrate that Paul did not mean that the requirement of baptism can now be omitted. Paul was consistent throughout his ministry of the gospel. Is it not reasonable to assume that just as he was saved and by which others were acquitted, he addresses it in this context. The Bible speaks of our common faith:

JUDAS 3.

"Beloved, while I zealously wrote to you about our common salvation, I felt the need to exhort you through my writing to fight vigorously for the faith once delivered to the saints."

Let's see how Paul was saved. He met Christ on the road to Damascus and immediately called Him Lord. Yet he was not saved at that moment. He had to hear from Anninas what to do.

ACTS 22:16.

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

**The question is:** Did the apostle, when preaching the gospel to others, preach baptism? The baptism he had to undergo?

**Well-known Baptist-led H.B. Hackett of the Newton Theological Institution writes the following.**

"Wash away your sins" states "a result of the baptism" and it corresponds to "for the remission of sins" in Acts 2:38. In other words, one submits to baptism "in order to be forgiven" (1879, 276).

How does one understand this now? Is the same gospel then one with baptism and without baptism? Paul, however, preached the gospel constantly, without turning. He did not maintain opposing views.

### ACTS 19: 3-5.

"And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 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. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus."

This "**phrase**" along with the one in Matthew 28:19 indicates that;

"Those who are baptized become the possession of and come under the dedicated protection of the one whose name they bear" (Danker et al. 2000, 713; cf. Thayer, 94).

Along with these statements we also have those of Mark 16:16. In both his letters to the Romans and Galatians, Paul affirms that the sinner is "**baptised into Christ.**" He also adds the words "**raised in a new life**". The apostle also insisted that life is in Christ.

2 TIMOTHY 2:10.

"Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory."

On the basis of all the parallel statements, one cannot conclude that Ephesians 2: 8-9 excludes the baptism of the believer. Later in his letter to the Ephesians, Paul emphasizes the intention of salvation and includes a reference to baptism. Later in the same letter, Paul emphasizes his intention regarding salvation, specifically including a reference to baptism. He emphasizes that just as a man loves his wife, so Christ loves His church.

EPHESIANS 5: 25-26.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word."

YOUNG'S LITTERAL TRANSLATION.

"The husbands! love your own wives, as also the Christ did love the assembly, and did give himself for it, that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it with the bathing of the water in the saying,"

LEXHAM ENGLISH BIBLE.

"Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for her; in order that he might sanctify her by cleansing her with the washing of water by the word;"

JAMIESON FAUSSET BROWN.

with the washing of water — rather as Greek, "with," or "by the laver of the water," namely, the baptismal water. So it ought to be translated in Tit\_3:5, the only other passage in the New Testament where it occurs. As the bride passed through a purifying bath before marriage, so the Church (compare Rev\_21:2). He speaks of baptism according to its high ideal and design, as if the inward grace accompanied the outward rite; hence he asserts of outward baptism whatever is involved in a believing appropriation of the divine truths it symbolizes, and says that Christ, by baptism, has purified the Church [Neander] (1Pe\_3:21).by the word — Greek, "IN the word." To be joined with "cleansing it," or "her." The "word of faith" (Rom\_10:8, Rom\_10:9, Rom\_10:17), of which confession is made in baptism, and which carries the real cleansing (Joh\_15:3; Joh\_17:17) and regenerating power (1Pe\_1:23; 1Pe\_3:21) [Alford]. So Augustine [Tract 80, in John], "Take away the word, and what is the water save water?"

Add the word to the element, and it becomes a sacrament, being itself as it were the visible word." The regenerating efficacy of baptism is conveyed in, and by, the divine word alone. The term "**cleansed**" is the synonym of "**saved**" in Ephesians 2: 8. We see, therefore, that the "**grace**" based "**faith**" of Ephesians 2: 8 certainly includes the baptism of Ephesians 5:26. The first verse emphasizes the Divine grace associated with faith-filled obedience. The later verse points out that the message of the word, mixed with the washing of the body by water, is the method of completing the process. We also see that Paul uses the phrase "**by grace are ye saved**" in Ephesians 2: 5, but he takes it further and considers it as a whole.

### EPHESIANS 2: 6.

"And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"

The grace that saves us goes hand in hand with the act of being baptised. The "**raised together**" clearly happens by rising from the baptismal water. Without baptism, grace is only halfway through the work of salvation.

### TITUS 3:5.

"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;"

The “**bath of rebirth**” is closely linked to the “**water bath**” of Ephesians 5:26.

“Most commentators take the washing as a reference to water baptism. But if water baptism is the means that produces the spiritual rebirth, we then have the questionable teaching of a material agency as the indispensable means for producing a spiritual result (but cf. Mat\_15:1-20; Rom\_2:25-29; Gal\_5:6). We accept the washing as a divine inner act, although the experience is viewed as openly confessed before men in baptism.”  
(Hiebert)

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## 20. WERE JOHN'S DISCIPLES OBLIGATED TO BE BAPTIZED?

The question is, should the disciples of John the Baptist be baptised again after the day of Pentecost? There is quite a bit of discussion about this question. Some believe that all had to undergo the baptism of the believer again because Paul had baptised some of John's disciples.

### ACTS 19: 1-7.

"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, 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. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. 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. When they heard this, 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. And all the men were about twelve."

There is no definitive indication in the New Testament regarding the question. The above verse does not provide a clear answer to the question. Also, we must remember that this subject has nothing to do with our salvation of today. It is not a make or break matter that affects our view of today. What is certain is the fact that a strong case can be made of the fact that John's baptism was a valid baptism and that people under John's ministry did indeed come to repentance. Also those who were baptised by Jesus' disciples, and therefore did not need to be baptised again.

### LUKE 1:17.

"And he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elias, to turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord."

John's calling was to prepare the way for Jesus Christ. If those who were baptised by John were to be baptised again after the Day of Pentecost as the "**unprepared**" had to do? So what was the difference between the "**prepared**" and the "**unprepared**" or those who were "**ready**" and those who were not "**ready**"? Were those who were "**prepared**" now suddenly "**unprepared**" when the day of Pentecost arrived. There is no example that the Lord's disciples were baptised again after Pentecost.

Nowhere is there any evidence that John's disciples were ever baptised again. Acts 19 does not require it. It is almost 100 percent certain that the men of "**Ephesus**" were baptised by some form of John's baptism long after John's death. They did not even know about Pentecost. Their baptism was based on a poor knowledge of Jesus, and therefore it was not valid. There is nothing in the context of this scripture to suggest that John's baptism was temporary in nature.

**What about the Apostles?** There is no indication that the original Apostles were baptised again after Pentecost. If the baptism of John was not valid after Pentecost then the apostles would have to be baptised again. Although the Kingdom of God was not yet fully operational before the day of Pentecost, it was in a preparatory phase during Jesus' personal ministry.

### MATTHEW 12:28.

"But if I cast out devils by the Spirit of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

### LUKE 11:20.

"But if I cast out devils by the finger of God, then the kingdom of God is come unto you."

In connection with the kingdom motif, Jesus said;

**MATTHEW 21: 28-32.**

"But what do you think? A man had two children, and he goes to the first and says: Child, go and work in my vineyard today. And he answered and said, I will not; but later he repented and left. Then he went to the second and said to him the same thing; and he answered and said, Yes, Lord. And he did not go. Which of the two did the will of the father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That tax collectors and harlots go before you into the kingdom of God. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And you saw it and did not later repent to believe him."

One of the boys represents the High Priests (the top class of the community) and the other one represents the tax collectors and peasants, the lower class of the community. This comparison is then linked to the baptism of John. Most of the Jewish leaders rejected baptism, but many tax collectors and peasants accepted it.

**MATTHEW 21:25.**

"The baptism of John, where did it come from, from heaven or from people? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will ask us, Why then did ye not believe him?

LUKE 7:30.

"But the Pharisees and scribes rejected the counsel of God concerning them, not having them baptized by him."

LUKE 3:12.

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

LUKE 7:29.

"And when all the people and the publicans heard it, they justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John."

*It was within this context that Jesus rebuked the High Priest and the elders.*

MATTHEW 21: 31-32.

"Which of the two did the will of the father?" They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That tax collectors and harlots go before you into the kingdom of God. For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not; but the publicans and the harlots believed him. And you saw it and did not later repent to believe him."

*This verse is not linked to time. Jesus did not say that it is only temporary. Also, the main ingredient was the faith of those who were baptised. Thus, it is clear that the faith of this group gave them access to the kingdom of God. So there was no need for a second baptism. They believed the message of John and were therefore saved.*

They are saved in the same way that everyone was saved in Old Testament times. They foresaw the cross of Christ.

MATTHEW 3: 1-2.

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, saying, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

This verse's call is closely connected with the following verse.

LUKE 3: 3.

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

It is therefore clear that these "**baptisms**" and "**faiths**" bring about forgiveness and give them access to the kingdom when it becomes fully a reality. Why offer a baptism because the kingdom is on its way if it has nothing to do with entering this kingdom. John was baptised "**for the remission of sins.**" If the sincere people who underwent his baptism were not now forgiven, then the baptism of John was a deception. However, if they did receive forgiveness, why should they be baptised again after Pentecost? Now some may argue that if this is true it must also be true of the ancient sacrificial system of the Jews.

However, it is not the same at all. The ministry of John was a unique ministry.

### LUKE 16:16.

"The law and the prophets were until John; from henceforth the gospel of the kingdom of God shall be preached, and every one shall enter into it by force."

John's message was to prepare honest Jews to enter the kingdom of God. So if John preached the message of the kingdom, the implication is that those who obey it would become part of the kingdom. Biblical typology is not always a clear field of study. The biblical type is a shadow in the pages of the Old Testament that is revealed in the New Testament. A type in the Old Testament has an anti-type in the New Testament.

### 1 PETER 3: 21-21.

"Who were once disobedient when the patience of God once waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which few, that is, eight, souls were saved through water; of which the counter-image, the baptism, now also saves us, not as a remission of the filthiness of the flesh, but as a prayer to God for a good conscience — through the resurrection of Jesus Christ "

Some types and anti-types were clearly reproduced, others were again suggested. We can look at Solomon who built the temple as a type of Christ building His church. David who provided the material of the temple as a type of John the Baptist. Just as the material of David for the Temple was not made over when Solomon built the temple, so it is not expected that what John did should be redone after Pentecost. On the day of Pentecost, Peter and the apostles preached the gospel. Luke says the following.

### ACTS 2:41.

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

The term "**added**" in the KJV uses the Greek "**prostithemi**" which indicates:

"To add to something that is already present or exists." Again, "of persons who are added to a group already existing" with *Acts 2:41* cited as an example (cf. v. 47; Danker, p. 885; *emphasis added*).

It is the view of most of the biblical scholars that the use of this language indicates that the "**three thousand**" who were baptized that day were added to those who had been prepared in advance.

**William Larkin, Professor of New Testament Greek at Columbia Biblical Seminary, writes:**

*"Three thousand souls welcomed the word (compare 28:30), with its conditions and were baptized. They joined the ranks of the apostles and disciples in the nucleus of the New Testament church" (p. 60).*

**J. A. Alexander argues:**

*"That those baptized were added to" the previously existing body of believers, "including the company of the 120 persons mentioned in Acts 1 (p. 89).*

**J. W. McGarvey stated:**

*"That those immersed on Pentecost" were added to the previous number of believers" (p. 45).*

**It is therefore clear that there is no evidence that the disciples of John were to be baptized again.**

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## 21. WHAT ABOUT BAPTISM ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST?

Two arguments that are constantly used by those who believe in “**sprinkling**” as the method of “**baptism**” are grounded in Acts 2.

**First:** they argue that it was impossible for the Apostles to baptise three thousand by immersion.

**Second:** they argue that there was not enough water in Jerusalem to immerse so many people. However, the arguments are based on inaccurate information. We must take into account the following facts;

**1.** The Bible does not specifically specify that 3000 were baptised. The 3000 of Hand. 2:41 may refer to 3000 who were baptised, but it may also refer to 3000 who were added to the church of Christ including those who were previously baptised by John and now become part of the kingdom.

**2.** Nothing in the New Testament teachings requires the apostles to do the baptismal work alone. Other believers could have helped with the task.

**3.** If only the apostles were baptised and there were 3000 who were baptised, they could easily have done so in a few hours. Baptism does not take that long.

To say that there was not enough water is completely unfounded. The fact is that there were several baths in Jerusalem that were quite large.

J.W. McGarvey thoroughly investigated this matter in 1879.

Consider the following facts.

1. The Virgin's bath was about 132 feet in circumference and 3 feet deep.
2. The bath of "Siloam" was about 800 feet in circumference and was more than 3 feet deep.
3. Camp "Gihon" covered more than 3 acres and was as much as 40 feet deep.
4. "Upper Gihon" was about one and a half acres and could hold water as deep as 20 feet.
5. McGarvey also indicated that most homes had catchment tanks that could catch water.

(Lands of the Bible, Philadelphia: Lippencott, 1881, p. 201).

The "sprinkle - Jerusalem" argument holds no water.

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## 22. BAPTISM: NECESSITY AND NON-NECESSITY.

There are important issues associated with New Testament baptism which, if we want to obey God, we must consider. At the same time, certain matters are associated with sacred obligation in the area because desirability, so flexibility is allowed.

### **Necessities.**

**First;** there is the matter of one's intellectual and spiritual state. Those who are entitled to baptism must be a responsible person who has become a sinner by his ability to make his own choices. Sin is the transgression of the divine law.

### **1 JOHN 3: 4.**

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

### **THE WILLIAMS TRANSLATION.**

"Everyone who commits sin commits lawlessness; sin is lawlessness."

It is an act of disobedience that one chooses to do. No one is born sinful. We are born with the ability to sin, but we are only considered a sinner when we do it.

The sinner must be a person who is able to understand the grace of God through the biblical information provided to him. Without faith one cannot be baptised.

**Second:** the believer must be willing to repent of all his past sins and repent of them, and be willing to turn away from his sinful life and walk in a new life. Repentance must precede baptism.

### ACTS 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."

### GODS WORD.

"Peter answered them, "All of you must turn to God and change the way you think and act, and each of you must be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins will be forgiven. Then you will receive the Holy Spirit as a gift."

All of these requirements completely exclude the error of "**infant baptism**" in that infants do not have the ability to believe or repent. As infants they have no sin, and will not perish.

**Thirdly:** the baptismal candidate must be immersed in water. This is what the Greek word "**bapto**" stands for. One is buried with Christ in baptism and is raised to a new life with Christ when he comes out of the water.

ROMANS 6: 3-4.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

COLOSSIANS 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."

The custom of "**pouring**" or "**sprinkling**" water on the candidate's head was an invention long after the time of the Apostles. There is no indication in the New Testament that these methods were ever used.

**Fourth:** there must be an understanding of the purpose of baptism. During the day of Pentecost, Peter clearly stated that baptism is "**for the remission of sins.**" Acts 2:38. 22:16. If this part of baptism is not important, why is it included in these verses along with baptism. We must remember that Jesus' death was "**for the remission of sins.**"

MATTHEW 26:28.

"For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."

Some are content to believe that the minimum requirement is just that; One must be baptised in order to obey God. Is there anyone who is baptised and does not feel obedient to God? The logical consequence of this argument is this; all people who are baptised are children of the Lord regardless of their understanding of baptism and regardless of the level of life they maintain. Such a situation is difficult to defend. What we have just discussed are the necessities of baptism and are not negotiable.

### **The non-essentials.**

There are certain things around baptism that are not fastened. It's negotiable. They are most strongly associated with opinions, benefits and expectations. Unfortunately, some who did not understand this created limitations where it should not be, and this caused great controversy.

**First;** some boast that they were baptised in the Jordan River **"just like Jesus"** and that they are more privileged than others. Others refuse to be baptised in a baptismal font. They want to be baptised in **"running"** water, because that is what the word says. It is not true. Where one is baptised does not matter. What is important is that it takes place by immersion.

**Second;** some believe that baptism is not valid when it is not done by a **"minister"**.

However, there are no prescriptions by whom this is done. Even an unsaved person can serve the baptism (it is not recommended) because it is not about the one who administers the baptism, but the one who receives it. Baptism is about what the baptised person understands and what he does and not what the one who performs the baptism understands or does. If the baptism's baptism was dependent on the one baptising him, he would never know whether his baptism was valid or not. No one can see in the heart of another person.

**Thirdly:** there is now a new baptismal font where the baptised stand inside the water and the one who performs the baptism stands outside the water. Now there are those who object to it, because then both must now stand in the water. Again, there is no such command in the Bible. It is the baptised who are immersed and not the one who administers the baptism.

**Fourth:** should the baptized stand so that he can be immersed? Or can he just sit in a baptismal font that is not very big? Should he be immersed backwards or forwards? It does not matter. The most important thing is that the baptism is immersed.

**Fifth:** The "**United Pentecostals**" which is actually "**Jesus Only**", insist that all baptism must be done with the words "**in Jesus Name**" otherwise it is not valid.

Others insist that baptism be done by pronouncing "**in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.**" Both are wrong. The scriptures - Matthew 28:19 and Acts 2:38 do not indicate a "**word formula**", but the relationship the believer has with the Deity in baptism. Furthermore, it is only an indication that baptism is served in God's authority. No "**word formula**" needs to be used. If one is used it is also not wrong whichever one is used. It is therefore essential that we study the Bible correctly and discern what the Bible really says on any matter.

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