

matters is because it is what gives the baptized believer a reason to live. And, even more than that, baptism into the blood and death of Jesus is how those who are dead in their sins (Romans 6:23) can be made alive again to God! Truly, in 1 Peter 3:21, Peter said it best when he said, **“There is also an antitype which now saves us- baptism... through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”**

Baptism matters for so many different reasons. That is why, if you haven't already been baptized into the blood of the Savior Christ Jesus

in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit for the remission of your sins, you need to be. It is the only way to be pleasing to the LORD God Almighty.

By Curtis Carwile

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Faithful Sayings

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Services

Sunday: 9:30 a.m.
10:20 a.m.
6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.

Elders:

Ken Ford
Charles Kelley
Pat Ledbetter

Deacons:

Dean Bowers
Eddie Cook
Bill Davis
Pat Goguen
Neil Ledbetter
Jeff Nunn
Fred Perez
Rusty Scott

Evangelist:

Kyle Pope

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Why Does Baptism Even Matter?

We talk a lot about baptism in religious discussions. It is one of the major points of division among many in the religious world. Some people say that it is necessary while others say that it isn't. Some people say that it requires a conscious belief on the part of the one being baptized while others say it requires no belief on the part of the baptized, allowing for the baptism of infants and the physically dead. Some people say that baptism requires immersion into water, a “total overwhelming washing,” while others say pouring or sprinkling of water is just as good. Whatever the conflict, it is sad that something that God intended to be a point of unity has become a source of conflict and division. It makes any open-minded person ask the question: “Why does baptism even matter?” For the

sake of “unity,” many say that baptism doesn’t matter and that “we” should not divide “ourselves” over the matter. However, for the sake of REAL unity with God (1 John 1:5-7), the Bible says that baptism DOES matter.

Baptismal Washing Before the New Testament.

We can clearly see that the issue of baptism is important because it is discussed in the Bible. Baptism is a practice that was illustrated in the Old Testament ceremonial washings and purification rites (Numbers 19). In Exodus 30:17-21, Moses instructed Aaron and his sons to wash their hands and feet before entering the Tabernacle. In Leviticus 14, Moses instructed the Israelites on the ritual cleansing for lepers who had been healed of their leprosy. In 2 Kings 5, the prophet Elisha tells Naaman to go dip (or immerse) himself in the Jordan River seven times and, then, he would be healed. The Greek Old Testament actually

uses the word *baptizo* (translated “baptize” in the New Testament) in reference to Naaman “dipping” himself in this passage. By New Testament times, Gentiles who converted to Judaism were immersed as a part of their conversion. The point is that this was not an uncommon practice. So, when John the Baptizer appeared in Matthew 3, it was not odd that he was baptizing people, calling them to repent and to “clean up” their lives.

Baptism is Taught in the New Testament

Another reason it is so important to discuss BAPTISM comes from the direct commands, the examples, and the unavoidable conclusions found within the pages of the New Testament. After Jesus’ death, burial, and resurrection, Jesus commanded the eleven remaining Apostles to **“Go into all the world, BAPTIZING them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to**

observe all things that I have commanded you” (Matthew 28:19-20, emphasis mine). This is exactly what the Apostles did. In Acts 2:38, Peter commanded those listening to **“Repent and let everyone of you be BAPTIZED in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins”** (emphasis mine). In vs. 41, we have an example of those who gladly received that command being BAPTIZED. As a result of that, the unavoidable conclusion of the passage is that those people were saved (Acts 2:40), received the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38; Romans 6:23), and were added to the Church (Acts 2:47). This was not an unusual occasion. In Acts 8:12-13, people were BAPTIZED when they believed what Philip taught about Jesus. In Acts 8:36-38, the Ethiopian Treasurer was BAPTIZED after believing that Jesus was the Messiah spoken of in Isaiah 53. Paul was BAPTIZED when He believed in Jesus (Acts 9:18). In fact, everywhere the Apostles and other Chris-

tians went, they preached Jesus and that those who believed in Jesus are to be BAPTIZED (Acts 10:48, 16:33, 19:5). As we can clearly see, BAPTISM is commanded for those who believe in Jesus. That is the unavoidable conclusion to which we must all draw.

The Meaning of Baptism

The issue of baptism isn’t important just because it is discussed in the Bible and because of the commands, examples and unavoidable conclusions found in the New Testament. In addition to those things, baptism matters because of what it means. Romans 6:3-4 says, **“Or do you not know that that as many of us have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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, even so we also should walk in newness of life.”** The biggest reason why baptism