

Common Baptism Misconceptions

Aaron Beard
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Introduction:

- A. Develop mental picture:
 - 1. You are studying with someone about the topic of baptism
 - 2. You explain and explain, but they just do not get it
 - 3. This is the way the study ends – It can get frustrating
- B. The passages are clear as day to you
 - 1. **Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16** – you could go on
 - 2. Why is it that so many don't understand this?
- C. You see, many people just have a misconception about what we believe about baptism
 - 1. This may be partly our fault – hammering it to the point of neglecting other things
 - I don't think this is so much the case
 - 2. It may be because it is presented in the wrong light by preachers of different viewpoints
 - Probably more likely the case
- D. If we are to be successful in teaching people we have to understand these misconceptions
 - 1. When they don't seem to understand, you will know why – fewer “dead end” studies
 - 2. You will be more likely see to the “fruits of your labor”
 - 3. None of these misconceptions are ridiculous – but very sincere and in some cases logical
- E. Maybe there is someone here who has not been baptized for the remission of their sins – I hope that you will see tonight it's necessity and act upon your faith in obedience to God

I. Some think we are saying baptism is an act meriting salvation

- A. They Understand That Salvation Is Not Something You Earn
 - 1. **Romans 3:22-24; 28**
 - a. You have two choices as to how to be saved: By your own works or by grace
 - b. The one who seeks justification by law keeping (perfect obedience) is hopeless
 - 2. If we try to be justified by our works – It's not that we'll fall, WE ALREADY HAVE
 - a. **Galatians 5:4**
 - b. No one can stand before God on his own two feet, without God's grace
 - 3. (*Read excerpt from Baptist Sermon*)
- B. However, who would say that being obedient to God negates His grace?
 - 1. One who can't see baptism for the remission of sins because it is a work has a problem
 - a. Baptism is not so much a work we do but a work God does
 - 1) **Colossians 2:11-14** – Who's doing all the work here?
 - 2) Baptism may be the most passive part of your salvation – you do nothing!
 - b. One who denounces baptism usually requires repentance
 - 1) Repentance requires much more effort than baptism does
 - 2) Would you say one would not have to repent?
 - 2. God's grace and promises has always been conditional upon obedience to His laws
 - a. This does not nullify the fact that we are saved by grace
 - b. The gift of God (**Romans 6:23**) is far greater than anything we could do for Him
 - 3. Passage after passage deal with how we should live our lives
 - a. If obedience to God = justification by works then it stands to reason that we should not try to live faithful to Him
 - b. That would be OBEYING GOD! –the problem many have with salvation by baptism
 - c. This sounds absurd, but I am just following this argument to its logical conclusion
- C. Baptism is just part of doing what God says to do in seeking His grace
 - 1. God's promises have always been conditional upon obedience
 - a. Notice how Paul opens and closes the book of Romans

- b. **Romans 1:5; 16:26** – Both bookends are speak of this “obedient faith”
- 2. Obedience to gospel does not equal meriting the benefits
 - a. The only I have ever deserved is condemnation!
 - b. But thanks be to God that He extends His grace and mercy to me – if I obey Him
- 3. God told me that I should – **Acts 2:38** – So that is what I will do!

II. Some think we are saying that there is power in the water

- A. They understand what the Bible teaches – The POWER is in the blood!
 - 1. **Ephesians 2:11-13; I Peter 1:18-19**
 - a. Plainly put, without His blood we would be hopeless before God
 - b. Remember the Tenth Plague God put on Egypt
 - 1) The firstborn of every household was to be killed
 - 2) Only the ones who had blood on the doorposts were to be saved
 - 3) Today we must have the blood of the Lamb on the doorposts of our hearts
 - c. Through His blood we are delivered from bondage of sin and saved from death
 - 2. It is only through His blood that we can approach God – **Hebrews 10:19-20**
 - a. In the tabernacle, there was a veil that stood between man and God
 - 1) When Christ shed His blood on the cross this veil was ripped in half
 - 2) This symbolized that anyone could now have access to God!
 - b. This is something that we can do with BOLDNESS
- B. It's through baptism that we contact this powerful blood of Christ
 - 1. **I Corinthians 6:9-11**
 - a. These people were once wicked people – but something happened to them
 - b. They had been washed – what were they washed in?
 - c. Does not specifically say here, but we can conclude that they were baptized by looking at all the other NT passages concerning being washed
 - 2. **Revelation 7:14**
 - a. It is at the time of our “washing” that we come in contact with the blood of Christ
 - b. It is this washing that makes our robes white as snow
 - 3. It was this very thing that Saul was instructed to do
 - a. He had been formerly persecuting Christians – He felt he was doing this for God
 - b. Talk about a man coming to Christ with a record, this is the man
 - c. Look at what Annanias tells him to do – **Acts 22:16** – wash away thy sins!

III. Some see it as excluding the heart

- A. They know that your heart must change
 - 1. The gospel of Jesus Christ is all about changed hearts and changed lives
 - a. What wonderful power His gospel has to do this
 - b. Murderers, Adulterers, Thieves, Homosexuals, Fornicators – ALL can change
 - c. No psychologist has ever had this power of men's lives
 - 2. Even the Old Law was all about your heart
 - a. It did have more “outward” things to it, but God has always wanted man's heart
 - b. **Joel 2:13** – The people would act like they repented, but their heart was never in it
 - 3. **Romans 10:8-13**
 - a. I have heard this passage quoted over and over – it is a wonderful passage
 - b. God is looking for a heart change – without one, you cannot be saved
- B. Well, Baptism requires you to change you hearts
 - 1. Look at the people Paul preached to in **Acts 2**
 - a. These people had just crucified Jesus Christ – their only hope!
 - b. The power of the gospel of Christ had convicted them of their sins (**verses 36-37**)
 - c. They were torn to their knees by the convicted of their hearts! – we need more of this type of reaction in people today – Christians and non-Christians
 - 2. So they proceed to ask Paul what they could do – they were in a state of despair!

- a. **Acts 2:38** – Paul didn't say, "Say this pray" or to "Just holler out to God wherever you maybe standing whether home or the K-mart parking lot!"
- b. There has been much debate over the little word "FOR"
 - 1) Does it mean "in order to" or "because of"
 - 2) We aren't left to wonder about this – see **vs. 41**
- 3. Before one is baptized, he must repent
 - a. It is listed first in Acts 2:38 and other places for a reason
 - b. **Romans 6:1-4** → YOU DON'T BURY A LIVING MAN!
 - 1) Part of the "salvation process" includes crucifying the old man
 - 2) This is repentance – it is a heart change
 - 3) It is deciding that you will not longer live alive to sin, but die to sin
- 4. A HEART CHANGE IS ESSENTIAL TO BEING SAVED – its essential to baptism

IV. Some don't connect it to Jesus

- A. They know that in order to get to Heaven, you will have to go through Jesus
 - 1. The whole Bible is a story about Jesus Christ – points to Him then tells about Him
 - 2. **John 14:6** – "I am the way, the truth and the life..."
 - a. If we ever want to go to Heaven we will have to do it through Jesus Christ
 - b. Muhammed is not the way, Buddha is not the way – JESUS IS THE WAY!
 - 3. **John 15:1-6** – The only way will be saved is if we come to Jesus Christ

- B. First of all, the Bible is connected to Jesus because He commanded it
 - 1. It didn't recommend it, or say it might be a good idea – IT SAID IT MUST BE DONE!
 - a. Some believe that you don't really have to be baptized
 - b. They contend that to be an effective member you need to do it
 - c. They say that is makes the church much stronger
 - 2. If it isn't really necessary – Why did Jesus spend His last words on earth talking about it?
 - a. Seems like there would be more important matters to discuss, don't you think so?
 - b. **Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16**
 - 1) Jesus tells them not only where to go and what to teach
 - 2) He gives them the plan for making others be disciples
 - 3) It's as easy as 2+2 → Believe + Baptize = Saved!
 - c. You may argue with me about its necessity - would you argue with Jesus Christ?

- B. Jesus Christ can be seen and preached in baptism! – in fact it is essential
 - 1. Did you know that baptism was a joint burial – that is what the Bible says
 - a. Once more, let's look at **Romans 6:1-4**
 - 1) When one is baptized, He is crucified with Christ
 - 2) When one is baptized, He is buried with Christ
 - 3) You see, baptism is ALL ABOUT JESUS CHRIST!
 - 2. When one is baptized, he is crying out to Jesus for salvation - **Acts 22:16**
 - 3. It is only when one is baptized that he puts on Jesus Christ – **Gal. 3:26-27**
 - 4. You can't separate baptism from Christ
 - a. Baptism creates and exhibits union with Christ.
 - b. Baptism pledges allegiance to Christ.
 - c. Baptism is a commitment to Christ.

Conclusion:

When discussing baptism with our friends, let's make sure they understand what we are saying about baptism

It is essential for our salvation, however:

- We do not merit our salvation by doing it – we are simply obeying God
- We aren't being cleansed by the water, but by the blood of the Lamb
- We are experiencing a change in our hearts
- And finally, we are joining Jesus Christ and preaching Him