

"BAPTISM - IS IT NECESSARY OR NOT?"

By Dr. Hoyt W. Allen, Jr.

Sometime ago a person said, "Would somebody please tell me, is baptism really necessary to be saved or is it not?" Somebody must know the answer to this very important question. Either one has to be baptized to be saved or he/she does not, right?"

One can turn the radio or TV on and hear one preacher saying one thing and another saying just the opposite. Someone surely must be right and someone wrong, right?

I would contend that this is a very legitimate question and deserves an honest answer. Thus, in a few short sentences I will attempt to give an honest answer from the One who knows the answer - that is God and His Word.

Water baptism is not just a formality, as some would have us believe. According to the Bible, baptism is the act of obedience in which one has their state changed from "lost" to "saved" according to Acts 2:38, which states one has their sins forgiven at baptism.

If one can make an open minded observation about baptism, the following can be concluded:

- A) At the wedding altar, the state is changed from single to married.
- B) At the military induction ceremony, a person's status is changed from civilian to military personnel.
- C) At the property closing, a deed is changed to new owner.
- D) At the time of paying an insurance premium, a policy becomes effective.

Now, if an intelligent person can grasp the above, why is there so much confusion as to the importance of baptism, as being the "dividing line" between the "lost" and the "saved"?

Jesus said, "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved..." (Mark 16:16).

Peter said, "Repent and be baptized everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins..." (Acts 2:38). "...this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you..." (1 Peter 3:21).

Paul says, "or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?" (Romans 6:3). When one is baptized into Christ's death, he contacts His blood, since Jesus' blood was shed in His death. Thus, the song, "What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus!" It is the blood that saves us, but Jesus said to use water to contact it.

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