

Baptism - Acts 8:26-39 - 2023-01-15
(the occasion of baptism for Lieve van Eck)

INTRODUCTION

Today, this afternoon, we plan to baptize our dear friend Lieve van Eck.

But how do we know it is right for her to be baptized at this time?

How does she, the subject of baptism, know in her own conscience that it is right for her to be baptized?

How do I, the administrator of the baptism, know in my own conscience that it is right for me to baptize her?

She is a 13-year-old young lady, not a mere child, but still at home with her parents. How do her parents know that they should allow her to be baptized?

How does the congregation know that they should attend the baptism, say “amen” to it, and rejoice in it when it has been done?

The answers to these questions are right on the pages of the Bible, so we’ll have a look today and learn the truth of this matter; or be reminded of the truth.

We will not turn to the pages of the Old Testament for these answers about baptism. Baptism is an ordinance of the New Covenant or New Testament, instituted by our Lord Jesus Christ when He came. It is not to be found in the Old Testament scriptures. And what the Bible says about the ordinance of circumcision in the Old Testament scriptures does not govern our understanding of the New Testament ordinance of circumcision.

So, we’ll turn to Acts chapter 8 and read about baptism, to answer our questions, or to review what we have learned before, to know when a person is to be baptized.

TEXT

Acts 8:26-39

BODY

Should a person be baptized

- I. When He Has Been Going to Church? v. 27
 - A. The Ethiopian had gone up to the temple in Jerusalem to worship
 - B. It is very good for a person to assemble with the congregation on the Lord's Day to worship God in the name of Jesus Christ
 - C. But when a person starts going to church, is that when he should be baptized?
 - D. What about when he starts going to a Baptist church?
 - E. No, it is not the mere going to church that makes a person a fit subject for baptism; it is not something about going to church or going to a Baptist church that makes you know when to be baptized

Should a person be baptized

- II. When He Has Been Reading the Bible? v. 28
 - A. The Ethiopian had a Bible, or at least the prophet Isaiah
 - B. He had been taught to read, a very valuable gift from God
 - C. He actually was reading the Bible
 1. that is how he was occupying himself while he was "in the car"
 2. this is highly commendable
 3. you will find wonderful truths in the Bible
 - D. So, when you can read the Bible, and actually start reading the Bible, is that when you should then be baptized?
 - E. Not, it is not reading the Bible that makes a person a fit subject for baptism; it is not something about reading the Bible that makes you know it is time to be baptized

Should a person be baptized

- III. When He Has Heard Christ Preached to Him? v. 35
 - A. The Ethiopian was reading prophecy that told about Christ about 600 years beforehand
 - B. In that place in Isaiah, and in other passages, the fact that the Messiah, when He came, would suffer and die on behalf of guilty sinners, for our salvation, was prophesied powerfully
 - C. From that place, Philip preached Jesus Christ to the Ethiopian
 1. telling how He was crucified and died
 2. telling how He was buried in the tomb
 3. telling how He rose again the third day
 - D. We know that Philip must have preached to him repentance and forgiveness of sins in the name of Jesus
 - E. We know that when Philip had preached Jesus Christ, those who heard knew they should be baptized (Acts 8:12)
 - F. So, when you have heard someone preaching Jesus Christ, and he says, "Repent and be baptized," is that when you should be baptized?
 - G. Certainly it is a good thing; it is the best thing for a sinner to hear Christ preached
 - H. But when a person has heard Christ preached, and has understood that sinners should be baptized, he is on his way, but is not just yet a fit subject for baptism

Should a person be baptized

IV. When He Realizes That Christ Came to Save All Kinds of Men? v. 36

- A. The Ethiopian understood how he was not able fully to enter the Old Testament religion practiced in Jerusalem
 - 1. there were things about him being a foreigner and things about him being a eunuch that made it difficult or impossible
 - 2. in Jerusalem, where he just had been, he would have been faced with the reality that there were things that hindered him from being one of the people of Israel
- B. But as he heard Philip preaching the kingdom of God in the name of Jesus Christ, he came to understand that in Christ, it didn't matter what kind of person he was, or what country he was from
- C. It is very good news for a person to hear, who has considered himself some kind of outcast, and wondered if he could be included in the people of God, to hear that Jesus Christ died for all kinds of people to be saved
- D. But when a person has understood that, he is not just yet a fit subject for baptism; it is not yet time for him to be baptized.

Should a person be baptized

V. When He Believes In Jesus With All His Heart? v. 37

- A. The Bible says right here in Acts 8:37 that if you believe in Jesus Christ, as preached correctly from the scriptures, you may be baptized.
- B. The Bible here says that believing, faith, is the one thing by which a person can know of himself that he may be baptized
- C. Note that Philip does not say, "If you ask Jesus into your heart, you may." To believe is not equal to saying a prayer, no matter how sincerely you may mean it, or how many times you may say it. Faith does not consist in performing some action or in saying something or even in praying.
- D. So, as to the subject of baptism, the person to be baptized, faith in Jesus Christ gives him permission or warrant from the Lord, in his own conscience, to be baptized
- E. But, although he is very close, such a person is not just yet a fit subject for baptism; it is not yet time for him to be baptized.

Should a person be baptized

VI. When He Professes Faith in Jesus? v. 37

- A. 1689.29.2 Those who do actually profess...faith in...Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of [baptism]
- B. Two of the scripture proofs are right here in Acts 8
 1. Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.
 2. Acts 8:37
- C. Note that
 1. as to the subject of baptism, the person to be baptized, faith in Jesus Christ gives him permission or warrant from the Lord, in his own conscience, to be baptized
 2. but as to the administrator of baptism, the person doing the baptizing, it not the faith, but the profession of that faith, which gives him permission or warrant from the Lord to baptize the subject
 - a) the administrator cannot know the faith that is in the heart of the subject
 - b) he has to rely on the profession of that faith in words
- D. When a person believes in

When a person has heard Jesus preached from the scriptures
When he has realized that salvation in Jesus Christ is for all men
When he has come to believe in Jesus with all his heart
When he has professed that faith, so that others have heard
He is very, very close to being a fit subject for baptism
But it is not quite time for him to be baptized

Should a person be baptized when, in addition to these things,

VII. He Goes Down Into The Water for Baptism? v. 38

CONCLUSION

When a person has heard Jesus preached from the scriptures
When he has realized that salvation in Jesus Christ is for all men
When he has come to believe in Jesus with all his heart
When he has professed that faith, so that others have heard
When he has conceived of baptism as immersion, dunking, dipping all the way under in water, to symbolize the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, and has gone down into the water, that is when he should be baptized.

9:30 a.m. Bible Study 2023-01-15

Act 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 relationship of forgiveness of sins with:

-repentance

-baptism

Tit 3:3-7 For we ourselves also were sometimes foolish, disobedient, deceived, serving divers lusts and pleasures, living in malice and envy, hateful, and hating one another. (4) But after that the kindness and love of God our Saviour toward man appeared, (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; (6) Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; (7) That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1Co 1:14-17 I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; (15) Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. (16) And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. (17) For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Forgiveness of sins is granted upon repentance.

Luk 24:46-47 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: (47) And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Luk 17:3 Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he repent, forgive him.

Col 3:13 Forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any: even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye.

1689.15.5

...there is no sin so great that it shall bring damnation on them that repent...

Isa 1:16-18 Wash you, make you clean; put away the evil of your doings from before mine eyes; cease to do evil; (17) Learn to do well; seek judgment, relieve the oppressed, judge the fatherless, plead for the widow. (18) Come now, and let us reason together, saith the LORD: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.

Isa 55:6-7 Seek ye the LORD while he may be found, call ye upon him while he is near: (7) Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts: and let him return unto the LORD, and he will have mercy upon him; and to our God, for he will abundantly pardon.

So, we say that repentance is
-effectual
-salvific

Forgiveness of sins is symbolized by baptism.

Mar 1:4 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

Act 22:16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

1689.29.1

Baptism is...a sign...of remission of sins...

Allison - Prelude

Allison - Trinity 3 "From All That Dwell Below the Skies" - Andrew lead

Allison - Trinity 718 "Leaning On the Everlasting Arms" - Alex lead

Angie - Trinity 437 "Christ, of All My Hopes the Ground"

Jeremiah - Call to Worship and Opening Prayer - Acts 2:38-39

Roel - Scripture Reading - Isaiah 56:1-7

Thad - Congregational Prayer

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