

BAPTISM: A PLEDGE OR PROMISE TO FOLLOW CHRIST

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“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.” Romans 6:4

I would like to speak this morning on “**Baptism: A Pledge or Promise to Follow Christ.**” We witnessed this morning one of the most glorious blessings given to the New Testament Church, a baptism. This is one of the two ordinances that Christ gave to the Church to preserve and practice until He comes back the second time. The other ordinance of course is the Lord’s Table. Baptism is an important aspect of our Christian walk. Water baptism is an outward act of our public confession relating to our faith in our Lord Jesus Christ; it is an outward testimony as to what has happened inside of us, which is, being born again by the Holy Spirit of God.

Baptism again, is an ordinance given to the Church by God which identifies us with Christ. Paul is making a powerful analogy here in Romans 6:4, as he makes reference to baptism as to its implication. Clearly implying water baptism as immersion; is set forth here; again it is used as an analogy of our true union with Christ. Here, water baptism is set forth as a watery grave because baptism also symbolizes the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ. In other words this text clearly establishes the true mode of baptism in particular because true Biblical baptism is not sprinkling or pouring but by IMMERSION. We believe and hold to believer’s baptism and totally deny infant baptism and any type of baptismal regeneration. Why do I say this? Because there are no saving properties in baptism, baptism does not remove sin, or in any way seal our salvation, but it’s being in obedient to God in order to have a good conscience toward God as Peter would say in 1 Peter 3:21, “...*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.*” The only thing that can remove sin is the precious blood of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is always **blood** before water. (More on this in a moment.)

In verse 3 Paul asks another question, “*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?*” He says “know ye not...” or don’t you know, don’t you understand or are you ignorant of the fact or do you not know. Paul is continuing his thought process from the first two verses of the believer’s new state of being dead to sin. After establishing the truth that a believer cannot continue in habitual sin he now begins to present a series of basic and logical truths regarding our new state or sphere. He uses the word ‘know’ 4 times in verses 3, 6, 9 and 16 to show the fact of our death to sin. Paul wants the recipients of this letter and all others who read this to understand (to know) the blessed truth of our identification and union with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. A solid and definite knowledge of this is part of our growing in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus

Christ. Also so that we will not be misled or deceived concerning some faulty or defective views of this and fall into the deception of: (1) antinomianism, (2) legalism, (3) sinless perfection, (4) emotionalism, (5) asceticism, (6) mysticism, (7) ritualism, (8) new ageism and other types of false teachings. This is why Paul continues to ask questions, to provoke us to think to consider what he is saying. Therefore, know ye not, or don't you know. Know ye not is the Greek word, **agnoeo** from a = not and noeo = to perceive or understand which when put together it basically means not to comprehend or recognize, not to know or to be without knowledge. It also means to be destitute of knowledge or to be unformed about. This Greek word is in the present tense which speaks of not being in continuing ignorance. This is a very strong statement by Paul, as though he is saying; are you without knowledge or understanding to the point of being ignorant in failing to recognize what I am saying. This should remind us of the way our Lord Jesus Christ questioned Nicodemus when he said, "*Jesus answered and said unto him, Art thou a master of Israel, and **knowest not** (do you not understand or recognize, are you ignorant of) these things?*" John 3:10.

Paul again says in verse 3, "*Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?* In other words, don't you know, are you ignorant of the fact, do you not recognize that as many of us were baptized into Christ were baptized into death? He then plunges into the symbolic nature of baptism by immersion.

In order to understand the type or symbolism mentioned by Paul here you must understand the true type or anti-type which is baptism by immersion. Baptism by immersion is a controversial subject because many misunderstand this blessed ordinance that was given to the Church by God. Now, because of man's wrong interpretation of this ordinance it has created great controversy among Christians. As mentioned earlier we do not believe or practice infant baptism (pedo-baptism) because there is not any Scripture warrant for this practice. There is not one VERSE in the entire New Testament that mentions or infers any type of infant baptism. It is a man-made doctrine introduced in the middle of the 3rd century, around 254 AD.

Baptism is an outward profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is a public identification with Christ; it is a pledge to follow the Lord Jesus Christ. Baptism is only an outward expression and symbolic of the true inward cleansing or forgiveness of sins **THAT HAS ALREADY TAKEN PLACE!** Water baptism has absolutely no role or effect in salvation. After a person is regenerated or saved he becomes a candidate for baptism to be immersed in water. This is in obedience to the command God, that is, when God saves us; we are to be publicly baptized as a testimony of our profession in Christ. Failure to do this is in complete disobedience to the command of God and those who refuse to be baptized who profess to have been saved by God we must question the sincerity of their profession. This is a strong position to take but in most places in Scripture where salvation is mentioned; baptism follows. It is not a light thing for a person not to submit to baptism. When God saves a sinner the first thing he wants to do is be in obedience to God, so therefore, it is inconsistent to proclaim to be newly

born again and then refuse to be baptize. Thus, we have to question why some refuse to be baptize, we can give space for ignorance, misunderstanding the teaching of baptism or even medical reasons but when explained and instructed in the Word of God to follow in baptism and they still refuse then we must question the validity of their profession. We ask again does baptism add or seal our salvation. No it does not. Can a person enter heaven without being baptize? Yes, because baptism does not save or add to our salvation. The thief on the cross was not baptized and he is paradise or heaven today. Baptism does not keep us from heaven, but in a sense we must question why a person refuses to be baptized because it is a very important function of our Christian walk. It is like saying that a person who professes to be saved by God and then refuses to purchase or read a Bible. Surely you have to question the validity of their profession, there is no difference when a newly professed saved person refuses to be baptized. So we are excited that Karrisia this morning took that step of faith in seeking to be baptize and become member of this visible and local New Testament Church.

Now, we must also understand that the subject of baptism by immersion constitutes a position which creates opposition and or controversies between Baptists and other denominations, namely protestant churches which are centered on two particulars of baptism: (1) the subject and (2) the mode of baptism. May God help us to understand the truth regarding the ordinance of baptism!

Now, the truths surrounding baptism must have a beginning. Our Lord Jesus Christ sets forth the example for His followers to emulate, that is, true bona fide Christian believers are qualified to walk in His steps. The New Testament opens with the genealogy, birth and beginning of His ministry. In chapter 3 of Matthew's gospel the one ordained to prepare the way of the Lord and to make His paths straight begins to baptize people. John the Baptist comes in like a whirlwind and demands repentance of those who would hear him preach. Notice verses 1-12 of Matthew 3. He sets forth prerequisites for baptism in verses 6 & 8, "...*confessing their sins,*" and "*bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance.*" Then in verse 13 something happens that astonishes him. Christ comes seeking baptism from John the Baptist, "*Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him.*" John the Baptist is humbled to think that He who comes to take away the sin of the world seeks baptism especially since the Baptist's prerequisite for baptism is repentance from sin. In verses 14-17 our Lord tells him to go ahead and baptize Him, "*But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? 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. And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.*" This event is so important that it is recorded in all four gospels, here in Matthew, Mark 1:9-11, Luke 3:21-22 and John 1:29-34.

When Christ received baptism from John the Baptist He demonstrated at least three things:

- (1). He clearly established that baptism is not for salvation or remission of sins, since Christ did not need salvation and did not have any sin.
- (2). He also teaches us by example in His servant-hood. He doesn't ask us to do something He Himself didn't do. He teaches us the important of obedience as servants of God, which includes the ordinance of baptism.
- (3). He fulfills all righteousness as His baptism foreshadows His death, burial and resurrection. In the true death, burial and resurrection of our Lord Jesus Christ all righteousness was fulfilled. Thus, again baptism is not a light thing, but an important aspect of our Christian walk.

Believer's baptism is commanded in Christ's great commission. We must understand that Christ authorized believer's baptism and in that authorization He also sets forth a very important and clear and unmistakable prerequisite. We will look at two texts for this:

- The first one is 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 always, even unto the end of the world. Amen."* In verse 18 Christ makes a very potent and persuasive statement, He says, *"...**All power** is given unto me in heaven and in earth."* Our Lord says ALL POWER is given unto me. The word power here is not the Greek word *dunamis*, it is the Greek word *exousia* which means AUTHORITY. Christ is saying powerfully, ALL AUTHORITY is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Christ is exhibiting His sovereign authority for believer's baptism. He says 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 prerequisite our Lord makes before baptizing a person is that they should be disciples first. He says go ye therefore and TEACH, that is make disciples of all nations and then baptizing them. In other words teaching and making of disciples precedes their baptism. He then concludes by saying that we are to observe all things which He has commanded us and then the glorious promise of His being with us until the end of the world or until the end of this age.
- The second text is in 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."* Again the Lord gives the commission of going out into the world to preach the gospel to every creature, that is, making disciples and then those who **BELIEVE** are to be baptized. The order of these words is very important, faith precedes baptism and he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved. We have to presuppose the repentance has occurred already because

repentance and faith are inseparable in salvation: Christ's mandate is REPENT AND BELIEVE THE GOSPEL! We must understand that without true saving faith baptism has no validity at all. If a lost person goes into the baptismal waters all that happens is that he goes in a dry sinner and comes out a wet sinner. Sometimes this text in Mark is misinterpreted to teach that baptism is essential to salvation, but when we read the whole text we see clearly and unmistakably that the cause of a person's damnation is the failure to believe and not a failure to be baptized. There is no warrant in Christ's great commission to baptize anyone except those who **BELIEVE!** This does away with baptismal regeneration and it also does away with infant baptism and reinforces believer's baptism which we espouse.

The Apostles themselves would submit to the commandment and commission of Christ regarding believer's baptism. Peter preached his tremendous sermon in Acts 2 after God credentialize the Church as the means whereby He will now meet with His people in this economy or time period. After his sermon the Holy Spirit convicted some of them and look at the response of Peter concerning the effects of this, *"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? 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. For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the LORD our God shall call. And with many other words did he testify and exhort, saying, Save yourselves from this untoward generation. Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers."* Acts 2:37-42. Peter instructs them, repent and then be baptized. Those that repented and gladly received the word were BAPTIZED, following the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Then in Acts chapter 8 Philip is preaching and at verse 12 & 13, *"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done."* Philip preached the gospel of the kingdom of God and when they **BELIEVED** his preaching **THEN** they were **BAPTIZED!** In verse 13 Simon proclaimed to believe and THEN was baptized (Simon had a false profession, thus he went down a dry sinner and came up a wet sinner). Later on in the same chapter Philip preached to the Ethiopian eunuch as he read from Isaiah 53, *"And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."* We have again the same format; the eunuch believed FIRST and then was baptized. Philip followed the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Acts 9 we have the story of Paul's conversion. Paul sought to destroy the Church of the Living God, but the Lord arrested him and saved him. God commands Ananias to go see Paul, but he was afraid because of Paul's persecution, *"But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized."* The same format is followed; Paul believed first and then was BAPTIZED in obedience to the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Acts chapter 10 in the house of Cornelius, Peter is preaching the Word of God, God moves powerfully and Gentiles are saved and experience the same thing as Peter and the Jews did in Acts 2 as the Holy Spirit was poured on the Gentiles and then they were baptized, Acts 10:43-48, *"To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins. While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days."* Peter again follows the commission of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In Acts 16 we have two incidents concerning believer's baptism. In the first one the Lord opened Lydia's heart and then she was baptized, verses 12-15, *"And from thence to Philippi, which is the chief city of that part of Macedonia, and a colony: and we were in that city abiding certain days. And on the sabbath we went out of the city by a river side, where prayer was wont to be made; and we sat down, and spake unto the women which resorted thither. And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us."* Then in verses 30-33, the story of the Philippian jailor, *"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway."* In both of these instances the Apostle Paul followed the Lord's commission.

In Acts 18 in Corinthians notice again the familiar pattern and format for believer's baptism, in verse 8, *"And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized."* Paul again subjected himself to the Lord's commission. Believing preceded their baptism.

I want to point out something very interesting and very, very important. A careful study of all these examples will show clearly and without a doubt that there is not one, not a

single instance of infant baptism recorded. As one writer has correctly emphasized, *“Infant baptism has been read into the record rather than derived from it.”*

This now brings us to the study of the word baptism. Again, the topic of baptism by immersion always creates controversies between Baptists and other denominations. The two particulars which are hotly contested are: (1) the subject and (2) the mode, but we have seen that there is clear and unmistakably evidence in Scripture to show that baptism is by immersion and by no other mode and the subject is one who has been regenerated and believes on the Lord Jesus Christ. When this is properly understood it does away with baptismal regeneration whether practiced in infant baptism or adult baptism. The word baptism in the Greek here in Romans 6:4 is *baptisma*. The Greek word for baptized in Romans 6:3 is *baptizo*. You notice a similarity in the Greek and the English word for baptized and baptism. The reason for this is that this is not a translation of the word baptism; it is a transliteration of the word baptism. The scholars who devised the version that bears the name of King James were instructed that there would be certain terms “according to their ecclesiastical usage.” Again we are talking about a highly controversial subject that caused many Anabaptists their lives. So when they came to *baptizo* and *baptisma*, they did not translate these words, therefore *baptizo* became **baptize** and *baptisma* became **baptism**. For example most of you know that the word for home in Spanish “casa” or for love it is “amor.” This is a translation. Now the Spanish word for telephone is “telefono” and the one for hospital is “hospital.” This is not a translation but a transliteration. To transliterate is simply to transcribe a word from one language into another by taking a word in one alphabet into the corresponding letters of the other alphabet. In short they “Anglicized” the words *baptizo* and *baptisma*.

The words baptize and baptism literally means to immerse, immersion or submersion, to dip, to plunge. It also speaks of a purification rite; that is the ceremony washing of utensils, by dipping and or submerging in water. It also has a figurative connotation as used by Christ by in Luke 12:50, *“But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened till it be accomplished!”* Here our Lord Jesus Christ refers to a baptism of suffering, that is, he was immersed or overwhelmed with sorrow. Last of all the way it is used in our text in Romans 6 regarding the symbolic aspect of our union with Christ, our identification with Him in His death burial and resurrection.

Therefore in the texts used earlier in the gospels and Acts baptism and baptized are the only terms used to specify and indicate the practice of Christian baptism. In all of these texts it clearly means “IMMERSE” and cannot in any wise mean anything else. There are other words like wash away, in Acts 22:16 or washed in 1 Cor.6:11, which is the Greek word = “*apolouo*” and washed in Hebrews 10:22, Greek = “*louo*” that some would want to associate with baptism which has nothing to do with baptism but regarding washing as a mode. If they wanted to use the words sprinkled and pour to establish this type of mode there were Greek words to accommodate this mode of baptizing instead of immersion. Hebrews 9:13 & 19, *“For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer **sprinkling** the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of*

*the flesh.” “For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and of goats, with water, and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and **sprinkled** both the book, and all the people.”* The words sprinkling and sprinkled in these verses is the Greek word, “**rhantizo.**” Rev. 16:1, *And I heard a great voice out of the temple saying to the seven angels, Go your ways, and **pour** out the vials of the wrath of God upon the earth.”* The word pour here is the Greek word, “**ekcheo.**” In Mark 14:3, *“And being in Bethany in the house of Simon the leper, as he sat at meat, there came a woman having an alabaster box of ointment of spikenard very precious; and she brake the box, and **poured** it on his head.”* The Greek word for poured here is “**katacheo,**” which means to pour down upon or to pour over his head. So we see clearly that the words for pouring and sprinkling were available to the translators to indicate the essence of the mode regarding baptism.

Now, I was baptized as an infant and some of you were also baptized as infants and it didn't do anything for me or for you. We call ourselves Baptists for a particular reason, namely that we believe in believer's baptism or credo-baptism (believer's baptism). The word credo is the Latin word for “I believe,” we also get the English word creed from this, e.g., The Apostle's Creed. We understand with clarity that the Scriptures teach that there are no saving virtues or properties at all in baptism. Baptism does not save, seal or help in anyway with salvation, nor does it solidify salvation. Baptism has nothing to do with salvation. It is a testimony of our salvation. Baptism is only an ordinance which was given to the Church and plays no role in salvation.

As we conclude I would like to look at two verses that seem to give many people trouble regarding the essence of baptism. In other words the two verses we will consider many interpret to mean baptismal regeneration and thus they teach and preach that baptism saves. Chief proponents of this are the Church of Christ (Campbellites, followers of Alexander Campbell), Disciples of Christ or the Christian Church and Pentecostal Oneness. The first text we will look is 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 middle part of the verse has been misinterpreted by many, *“...and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the remission of sins**...”* The whole argument rests in the little preposition “for.” Those who believe that remission of sins is found in the baptismal waters say that the word **‘for’** means “in order to.” Be baptized...in the name of Jesus for (in order to) the remission of sins. The Greek word for “for” is “eis,” and Campbellites base their whole argument around the word for or “eis.” But the Campbellite interpretation of this word is only one of many of its many usages. Various Greek scholars clearly teach that “eis” has many different meanings that no one can be so dogmatic in building a theological structure on one of its meaning. J.H. Thayer, A.T. Robertson, Liddell and Scott Lexicon and one of the best Greek manuals written by Dana and Mantey, *“A Manual Grammar of the Greek New Testament,”* all concur with this idea or thought. In this great Greek manual Dana and Mantey give at least 5 categories and meaning which pertain to “eis,”

- (1) Direction = into, unto, to.
- (2) Position = in, among, upon.
- (3). Relation = as, for, against, in respect to.
- (4). Cause = because of.
- (5). Purpose = for the purpose of, in order to.

A good example is in Matthew 12:41, “*The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented **at** the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.*” The word “at” is the Greek word “eis,” it would be foolish to say that they repented “in order to” the preaching of Jonah, no, they repented “because of” the preaching of Jonah. Notice how it is used twice in Matthew 10:41, “*He that receiveth a prophet **in** the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man **in** the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.*” In this verse the Greek word “eis” is used twice, “in.” As you read this verse you can clearly see that the Greek word “eis” translated “in” cannot in any form or shape mean in order to, nor can it mean because of, neither of these would make any sense. No, this word is used as the basis or ground, that is, on the basis of the name of a prophet or a righteous man. According to Dana and Mantey’s Greek manual it would be number 3, that is, as a relation, in respect to, “*He that receiveth a prophet **in** (in respect to) the name of a prophet shall receive a prophet's reward; and he that receiveth a righteous man **in** (in respect to) the name of a righteous man shall receive a righteous man's reward.*” Thus, we see that there are indeed different meanings for the word “for” or “eis.” When you understand the truth centered around salvation, that is, we are save by grace alone without any works you understand the truth concerning the “analogy of faith,” in regards to salvation.

- Eph.2:8-10, “*For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 **Not of works, lest any man should boast.** 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.*”
- 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.*”
- Romans 4:2, “*For if Abraham were justified by works, he hath whereof to glory; **but not before God.***”
- Romans 4:6, “*Even as David also describeth the blessedness of the man, unto whom God imputeth righteousness **without works.***”
- Romans 9:11, “*(For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, **not of works,** but of him that calleth.)*”

- Romans 11:6, “And **if by grace, then is it no more of works**: otherwise grace is no more grace. **But if it be of works, then is it no more grace**: otherwise work is no more work.” 2
- Timothy 1:9, “Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, **not according to our works**, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began.”

The point is very clear in Scripture that we are saved by grace and not by works, works are produced after salvation, we are not denying good works, but to understand that good works do not produce salvation, they are post-salvifically applied, that is, after salvation.

- Eph.2:10, “For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus **unto good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”
- 2 Timothy 3:17, “That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto **all good works**.”
- Titus 2:14, “Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, **zealous of good works**.”
- Titus 3:8, “This is a faithful saying, and these things I will that thou affirm constantly, that they which have believed in God **might be careful to maintain good works**. These things are good and profitable unto men.”

In other words baptismal regeneration is contrary to the analogy faith, which teaches we are saved by grace through faith, and not of works! Anything outside this truth is false and heresy. Notice again the clear words of the Apostle in Eph.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.” Paul clearly teaches that we are not saved by works; any works and that would include baptism. It’s the blood of Christ that cleanses us from all sin. Hebrews 10:4 says, “For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins.” Therefore as the blood of bull and goats could not save in the Old Testament in like manner water baptism in the New Testament cannot save! This why we point you to Christ for salvation, not the baptistery, not some man made sacraments, not works or good deeds in whatever form, no, but in Christ and Christ alone! Notice what Paul says regarding how people are saved; see if you can find baptism in these two verses. Romans 10:9 & 13, “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and **shalt believe in thine heart** that God hath raised him from the dead, **thou shalt be saved**. For **whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved**.”

There are so many verses that teach the glorious analogy of faith regarding salvation that leaves out any type of works or any means of meriting grace. Salvation is by grace through faith. If you add to this you are preaching another gospel, another Jesus and another spirit. Now you might ask, what is the true interpretation of Acts 2:38? Again the phrase says, “...and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...” Well, the preposition “for” here cannot mean “in order to,” it means “because of.” “...and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ

for (because of) the remission of sins...” Peter also told them to repent and repentance precedes baptism. This falls in line with the analogy of faith of being saved by grace through faith. The Philippian jailor asked Paul, “*what must I do to be saved?*” Paul answered, “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.*” I would not want to entrust my whole theology or salvation to a little preposition, “for.” The word “for” can be used as “in order to,” or “because of.” I want to go to the barber **for** a haircut. Am I going to the barber in order to get a haircut or because of a haircut? Another example is; John Doe wanted **for** murder. Do we want John Doe in order to commit murder or because of committing murder. The text identifies the usage of the word and in this text, Acts 2:38, it is clearly speaking in regards to, “because of.” Another question, if baptism saves; how were the Old Testament saints saved? For the sake of time only one example which proves the glorious truth of the “analogy of faith.” The patriarch Abraham, how was he saved? Romans 4:3, “*For what saith the scripture? Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness.*” Gal.3:6, “*Even as Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness.*” James 2:23, “*And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God.*” All based on the Old Testament text in Genesis 15:6, “*And he believed in the LORD; and he counted it to him for righteousness.*” The way the Church of Christ, i.e. Campbellites escapes this is that they insist that there are 3 dispensations. I get the biggest kick when I ask them about the thief on the cross and they always answer, oh he was from a different dispensation. Foolishness always surrounds false teachings!

Quickly the next verse that many misinterpret is 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 a misunderstanding of the doctrine of salvation causes a person to read into the text something that it is not saying. The phrase, “*...be baptized, and wash away thy sins...*” can mislead those who do not understand the true teaching of soteriology. They immediately think that it is saying that baptism can wash away your sins. Baptism cannot and does not wash away sins; only the blood of Christ can wash away sins. There are two ways this verse can be interpreted.

1. Paul is using symbolic language saying that baptism is a type of our sins being washed away and cleansed by the blood of Christ.
2. Paul is saying that our sins are wash away by calling on the name of the Lord.

I personally lean to the second interpretation. In regards to the first point, Dr. W. R. Downing in his book, *The New Testament Church*, (p.101) says this regarding Acts 22:16, “*Acts 22:16 is a reference to baptism, bringing into juxtaposition baptism and washing. The association is merely symbolic in the sense that baptism presupposes a cleansing from sin. The mode is not in question, but inconsequential to the thought of forgiveness and cleansing. If the idea of washing were to be taken literally, then logically there would be some ground for assuming that the washing away of sins much be taken literally; i.e., baptismal regeneration, or at least baptismal forgiveness,*

making the rite essential to salvation—a premise absolutely contrary to the New Testament.” In speaking to the Church of Christ people I like to leave them with this thought, I tell them, “you know that you are no different than the Catholic Church, for both of you believe in baptismal regeneration. The only difference is in the age of the person. The Catholics believe in infant baptismal regeneration and you believe in adult (children, teenagers and adults) baptismal regeneration. Both are heresy and both are wrong and both give false assurance.”

I like what Robert Ashcraft said in his book, *Glory in the Church*, page 79, “Most Baptists do not realize the similarities between the Church of Christ and Catholic doctrine. Both insist on baptism as a means to salvation, by which one is baptized into the church, without which there can be no salvation. Please compare Campbell’s statement with the statement made by the Roman Catholic Church Council of Trent in 1551: (Campbell first), ‘Remission of sins cannot be enjoyed by any person before immersion. Belief of this testimony is what impelled us into water.’ (RC Church) ‘Baptism is a sacrament instituted by Christ to wash away original sin, and all those we may have committed; to communicate to mankind the spiritual regeneration and grace of Jesus Christ, and to unite them to the living head. If any man shall say that baptism is not essential to salvation, let him be accursed. In baptism not only our sins are remitted, but all the punishment of sin and wickedness.’”

Again the Word of God is clear regarding salvation, that it is by grace through faith, in Christ alone, Christ plus NOTHING! So it cannot be Christ and baptism. If there are any saving properties in baptism; i.e., if baptism saves, then; why did Christ have to die on the cross? Why not just go around and baptize everyone and get them to heaven, why even preach the gospel, JUST BAPTIZE! I hope you can clearly see that salvation is found alone in Christ. Romans 5:9, “Much more then, being now justified by his **blood...**” Eph. 1:7, “In whom we have **redemption** through his **blood, the forgiveness of sins**, according to the riches of his grace.” 1 John 1:7, “...and the **blood** of Jesus Christ his Son **cleanseth us from all sin.**” Rev.1:5, “...Unto him that loved us, and **washed us from our sins** in his own **blood.**” Don’t ever forget that it is always blood before water.

A couple of last things: Turn to Eph.4:5 says; “One Lord, one faith, one baptism.” There is only one baptism and it is by immersion. Secondly, in Matthew 21 when Jesus is questioned regarding His authority, notice His answer with a question in verses 23 -27, “And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things.” Here we see that baptism is from heaven and should not be taken lightly. Baptism is a mandate from heaven and the commission is from heaven also, 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 always, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*"

The following is copied: **"The Scriptures teach that the Lord prescribed immersion and the Lord's Supper to be carried on as ordinances by the New Testament church.**

As Bible believing Baptists find themselves in disagreement with other churches in relation to the topic of baptism, it would be helpful to summarize the New Testament position with the following four maxims:

1. Only believers are to be baptized. This excludes anyone who is an unbeliever (even babies, who neither believe nor disbelieve). Cf. Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:14-16. *Acts 8:36-37 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.*

2. Baptism is to be by immersion rather than by pouring or sprinkling. There are two main arguments for immersion. (1) The English word baptize has been transliteration of the Greek word baptizein. In order to render a proper translation we have to use the word immerse. (2) There are many passages that support the immersion translation. *Matthew 3:16 And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water:*

Acts 8:37-38 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

3. Baptism is not a step to salvation but it is a testimony that one has already received Christ Jesus as Savior. Baptism is a beautiful picture of salvation through the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. *Romans 6:4-5 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:*

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. Once again, every believer who has been immersed has pictured the death (dying to self-righteousness and giving in to Christ's righteousness),

burial (going completely under the water), ***and the resurrection*** (coming up out of the water).

4. Believer's baptism by immersion is a requisite to church membership. Throughout the book of Acts we find the order of salvation, baptism, and church membership. ***Acts 2:41 Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. Cf. Matt. 16:25-33; Acts 8:37-28.***

In practicing these four maxims, Baptists not only preserve purity in their local churches, but they honor the Lord Jesus Christ by respecting completely His Great Commission. *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...*

Has God saved you? Have you been baptized since you believed?

Repent and believe the glorious gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and then follow Him in obedience regarding believer's baptism.