

For Our Information

Ricky Ragsdale is in better spirits as a result of his physical therapy.

Jimmy & Annette Gray are out of town this weekend.

Gracie Simpson is also out of town this weekend.

Remember to mention those with health issues and those who may be traveling as you pray to the Father each day.

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We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

licensing and ordination. However, nothing of its kind is found in the New Testament.

Interestingly no emphasis is given in the New Testament to the administrator of baptism, the person actually performing the act. The emphasis there is upon the candidate or subject of baptism. The administrator in the given instances of baptism recorded in the New Testament is mentioned only in the sense of one who assists the candidate in his obedience. The efficacy of baptism does not rest upon the person doing the baptizing, but upon the one being baptized. *"God be thanked that you were servants of sin, yet you have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered"* (Rom. 6:17). *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized...."* (Acts 2:38). Such individuals are those who have *"purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit...having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever...."* (1Peter 1:22-23).

Friend, have you obeyed the Lord in baptism? Have you thus *"put on Christ"* (Galatians 3:28)? If not, won't you do so? There are many that would be glad to assist you.

Seeking His Righteousness

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Baptism

Norman E. Fultz



Baptism is a major New Testament topic, and most all religious groups that make any claim of being "Christian" practice a rite they call baptism. However, much controversy surrounds the subject of baptism, and these controversies usually center around four points - (1) The action involved in the administration of baptism, (2) The design or purpose back of it, (3) The proper subject or candidate for baptism, and (4) The administrator of baptism. We hope to give these matters a very straightforward consideration, allowing the New Testament to speak. Let those who want to argue know that their argument will thus be with the Word of God.

The Action: Some speak of "modes" of baptism, and the manual of a prominent denomination says, "Baptism may be administered by sprinkling, pouring, or immersion, according to the choice of the applicant." (Manual, Church of the Nazarene, 1948, p. 31). But what does the New Testament say?

"Therefore we were buried with Him by 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" (Romans 6:4). *"Buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who has raised Him from the dead"* (Colossians 2:12).



Meet With Us

Worship Services

Sunday 10:20 am & 5:00 pm

Bible Classes

Sunday 9:30 AM

Wednesday 7:00 PM

1512 Tanner St. Malvern, AR

TannerSt.com

Note that being raised with Christ follows one's burial with Him in baptism. If there is no burial, there is no resurrection with Him. If there is no resurrection, there is no newness of life.

When these plain passages are considered, statements in other passages become crystal clear as well. For example, of the Ethiopian's conversion scripture states, *"And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him. And when they had come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch say him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing"* (**Acts 8:38-39**). Sprinkling or pouring would necessitate no going down into the water.

The Design Or Purpose: The word of God assigns several purposes to baptism. Baptism is a condition of entrance into the kingdom of God. To Nicodemus Jesus said, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God,"* and again, *"Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God"* (**John 3:3,5**). If it were doubted that baptism is the water referred to, be reminded that baptism is the only ordinance in the New Testament associated with the church or kingdom that involves water. Of the Colossians who were *"buried with Him in baptism"*, Paul says, *"He has delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of the Son of His love"* (**Colossians 1:13**). By scriptural baptism, one's citizenship is changed from the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God.

Baptism is for the remission of sins. To the folk on Pentecost who asked, *"Men and brethren, what shall we do?"* Peter responded, *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit"* (**Acts 2:38**). There are two commands in his answer, *"repent"* and *"be baptized"*. The thoughtful student will observe that these two commands, being joined by the copulative conjunction *"and"*, what one command is for, the other is for. With this in mind, note what Ananias said to Saul, *"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord"* (**Acts 22:16**).

Through baptism one gets into Christ. Paul said to the Galatians, *"For you are all sons of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"* (**Galatians 3:26-27**). Salvation and all other spiritual blessings are in Christ (**2Timothy 2:10; Ephesians 1:3**), and the only means revealed for getting into Christ

is by being baptized into Him. Reconciliation to God is accomplished in Christ (**2Corinthians 5:19**), in the one body (**Ephesians 2:16**); but one is *"baptized into (the) one body"* (**1Corinthians 12:13**).

The Proper Candidate: The New Testament speaks to this matter with such clarity and simplicity, one wonders how there could be confusion regarding it. As is generally the case, the confusion results from ideas advanced by man, not from what the scriptures say. A couple of references will suffice to illustrate our point. The Discipline of the Methodist Church states, "Let every adult person, and the parents of every child to be baptized, have the choice of sprinkling, pouring, or immersion." Then follows "The Order for the Baptism of Infants." (1956 edition, page 545). The Manual, Church of the Nazarene in Articles of Faith, XIII Baptism, says that "baptism...is to be administered to believers..." and then in the next paragraph says "Baptism being the symbol of the New Testament, young children may be baptized, upon request of parents or guardians...." (1948 edition, pages 30-31). From these quotes it is apparent that some teach that believing adults as well as infants and young children are candidates for baptism. Let's let the word instruct us.

In the great commission Jesus said, *"Go therefore and make disciples (teach all nations, KJV) of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit"* (**Matthew 28:19**). Mark's account reads, *"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned"* (**Mark 16:15-16**). Those who are to be baptized are those who are taught and who become believers. Those who on Pentecost were cut to the heart by Peter's preaching were told to *"Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins...."* (**Acts 2:38**). These were hearers who were old enough to so reason and understand that they could be *"cut to the heart"* and ask, *"what shall we do?"* They were sinners who were told they needed to repent. Infants and young children do not satisfy this description of candidates for baptism.

Who May Administer Baptism? Denominational creeds, manuals and disciplines speak of those who are "licensed" or "ordained" being "vested with authority to administer the sacraments", one of which they consider to be baptism. A human board or agency does this