

Baptism Question

Subject: Apostle Ministry Feedback Form

Below is the result of your feedback form. It was submitted by Jessi on Tuesday, November 12, 2002 at 14:31:02

Topic: Question

Message: What is your doctrine on baptism? Do you believe that it is necessary to be baptized in order to go to heaven?

Baptism Doctrine

Dear Jessi,

A very deep question Jessi. I will do my best to answer it faithfully in a way that honors God.

OUR DOCTRINE

We believe in baptism by immersion as an “outward expression of a new heart, which is now set aside for God.” In effect, such a water baptism declares to all you know [and to the world] that you are indeed a part of God’s Kingdom [and you are indeed headed towards a heavenly kingdom].

COMMENTARY & STUDY

In Ephesians 4:5 we read: “there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism;” However, in Acts 19:3-4 we see the question posed: “Into what then were you baptized?” The answer: “Into John’s baptism.” John’s baptism was one of “repentance for the remission of sins.” [Mark 1:4]. Implicit in the response is the indication of more than one baptism.

John offered the proposition of a “real God and thus a real reason for repentance” to the people. It is clear in God’s Word that any such sincere repentance [of the heart] would yield salvation or eternal life. Thus baptism, in this instance, led to eternal life in heaven. This baptism is not well understood in Christianity, which has perverted the intent of God’s Word.

However, Eph 4:5 refers to another baptism. It is the baptism of Romans 6:4: “Therefore we were buried with Him [Christ] through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.”

Anyone who accepts Jesus Christ “in their heart” has indeed accepted the reality of God and has achieved a baptism of the Holy Spirit [a baptism unto death and resurrection in Christ]. This results in the inward dwelling of God, His Son and the Spirit of Truth that allows you to walk in a “newness of life.” It gives you the strength to stand tall for God’s truth. Such a person now manifests the Kingdom of God from within outward into the world around them. Even though, at this point, there may not have been a water baptism.

Baby baptism means virtually nothing because at the age of accountability [about 12 years old], each individual will have to make his or her choice as to which side they are on. No one can make this choice for another.

It took 10 years, after God touched my heart, for me to get baptized by immersion. It was a wonderful moment in time for me as it had bothered my spirit for a long time. Perhaps out of the misdirection of Christian theology and not fully understanding God’s Holy Word. Or, perhaps out of the desire of my heart to “proclaim I belong to God.” Or, perhaps some verses like Acts 10:47 indicating I could be baptized “having already received the Holy Spirit” and Acts 8:37 since “I believed with all my heart.”

The verse that was on my mind at the time of my water baptism was Acts 22:15-16: “For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. ‘And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.’ **AND NOW WHY ARE YOU WAITING?** This verse in Acts resonated within my spirit.

I knew where my heart was with God and the Book of Acts indicated to me that it was my privilege to get baptized having met all of God's criteria to undertake and **MAKE AN OUTWARD DECLARATION OF THE FAITH THAT WAS INSIDE OF ME!**

CASE 1: Anyone who is baptized by immersion and repents unto God for his or her sins will be saved and enter into eternal life. Assuming they then walk a godly life. This is true even without them having accepted Christ since they have "accepted God."

CASE 2: Anyone who accepts Christ accepts God and, if Christ is within them, they will walk in the newness of life through a baptism of the Spirit. This is true even if they have not been water baptized. Assuming they then walk a godly life and are "truly repentant."

This doctrine fully recognizes God's Word. When you study Ezekiel 18, you will understand Case 1. It is consistent with the Gospel of Christ, which is "to repent and be saved." Many Christians no longer have this perspective of repentance. It is a critical part of salvation. Repentance leads to righteousness. Righteous people belong to God!

Case 2 is also consistent with God's Word. God has offered us a different dynamic with His Son. Plus, HE has provided some spiritual help that we internalize through Christ [indwelling of the Holy Spirit abundantly]. Case 2 is consistent with Romans 10: 9-10, which spells out what is required for salvation through Christ. Water baptism is not a part of the criteria spelled out by the Apostle Paul in Romans. That is because it is a baptism of the [your] spirit unto God.

I hope this clears up a rather deep topic for you.

Blessings,
Apostle Edward

<http://www.edwardtheapostle.org>

"THE LORD OUR GOD IS ONE" Deut 6:4