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The Definition of Water Baptism.

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

The Definition of Water Baptism.

Topics.

- A baptism of fire and of suffering.
 - Baptism of judgment and of martyrdom.
 - Water baptism and marriage.
 - Everyone is baptised into Christ, not into a church.
 - The global and worldwide church of God and family of Christ.
 - An overall definition of the church.
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Baptism: from Strong's Concordance comes from the Greek word (baptizo) and means to immerse and make ones-self clean with water by dipping, immersing and submerging (like a vessel that is sunk).

Baptised: (baptizo) (bapto) means to make fully wet, to wash or cover wholly with a fluid it is used of ceremonial ablution, cleansing and purification and especially of the ordinance of Christian baptism and by implication carries the idea of staining as with dye. In the New Testament the word baptism primarily refers to a baptism into Christ by an immersion in water as commanded by Jesus this is the beginning of a spiritual journey to eternal life and everlasting glory, but it can also carry the idea of being immersed and submerged in calamities and afflictions with which one is quite overwhelmed by.

1

Throughout the Bible there are:

- Baptisms of fire, baptisms of suffering and a baptism of death.
- Baptisms of decision (i.e., being brought to a crisis of decision).
- Baptisms of judgment and a baptism of martyrdom.

BAPTISM OF FIRE

A baptism of fire is a confrontation of the truth that brings a person to a crisis decision of either accepting or rejecting Christ. Rejecting Christ is called a baptism in fire because the outcome is judgment to condemnation and eternal death (i.e., total extinction). Baptism of fire also embraces the purging from sin and false doctrine.

BAPTISM OF SUFFERING

A baptism of Suffering embraces persecution, suffering, and martyrdom

BAPTISM OF JUDGMENT

A baptism of judgment refers to a person being judged to life or condemnation

BAPTISM OF MARTYRDOM

The expression, baptism of martyrdom, refers to a person who has been put to death because of their faith, but by extension can refer to anyone who has made great sacrifices because of their faith and to proclaim the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ.

WATER BAPTISM AND MARRIAGE

Water baptism could be likened to a marriage and a single man or woman in the following way. They find a partner, listen to them and learn all they can about that person. If over time they begin to love that person a change of heart takes place and they desire to make a life-long commitment to that person. They seal that commitment and testify to the world by marriage that they are now prepared to live a new life with the one they deeply love and make them supreme in their heart, mind and life in all that they do. Those seeking God listen to the Gospel and the message of the Cross and the things concerning the Lord Jesus Christ, if they love what they hear and believe it and begin to taste the love and grace of God toward them a change of heart begins to take place. They have a heartfelt desire to commit their life to Christ.

To seal that commitment and testify to the world and to God that they are now prepared to live a new life with Christ as supreme in their heart, mind and life in all that they do they enter the waters baptism. In a natural marriage the bride enters into a new life united together with her bridegroom. Even though the bride not only loves her bridegroom and is fully committed to him long before the marriage ceremony, she cannot say she is married to him until she has made that legal and binding commitment to him. Water Baptism is very similar in that those being baptized even though they already love their Bridegroom and are fully committed to him they cannot stand before God with a clear conscience and say that they belong to the Kingdom of God until by faith they have gone down into the waters of baptism and risen up out of them into Christ and his global and eternal family.

EVERYONE IS BAPTISED INTO CHRIST, NOT INTO A CHURCH

There are certain religious organisations and churches in the global Christian world today that require a believer to embrace everything their church or the religious organisation they are affiliated with believes before they will water baptise them. Some will even require that the person desiring to be water baptised commit themselves to attending their church and their church only. Obviously, all Christian churches and Christian organisations and institutions who understand the importance and Scriptural teaching of water baptism are overjoyed when a sinner enters the waters of baptism and rises to new life in Christ. Most churches and religious institutions have a set code of doctrines and a firmly established statement of faith and in many of these organisations the oversight require those desiring to be water baptised to believe their doctrines and their statement of faith before they will water baptise a person even though they are truly devoted to Christ.

Some even require those desiring to be baptised not only to commit themselves to becoming a member of their church, but also commit themselves to attending their church every week before they will water baptise them. But this is not biblical water baptism. During the time of Christ and the apostles there were no denominations or religious organisations in the Christian faith. A person was water baptised into Christ on the basis of their honest heartfelt repentance before God and belief in the Lord Jesus Christ. Then they became a part of the global body

of Christ with all its divisions and imperfections. Remember there were Jews who had been steeped in the Mosaic Law for over four-thousand years and Gentiles who knew nothing of God, both uniting together as one nation (or a new creation) in the global body of Christ. These two groups would have to have shown each other enormous grace and love, because now in Christ they were members of the same global family growing together, in behaviour and knowledge until Christ returns.

Today: a repentant sinner who wants to submit to God and accept Christ should be water baptised regardless of whether they want to be a member of an individual church or not. This is because being a member of a church has nothing to do with being saved to eternal life. It may help the new born believer to grow in their salvation, but it should not be a requirement of their baptism. Being a member of a religious organisation or church should be a separate choice and issue to being water baptised into the global family of Christ. Every newly baptised believer should have the choice of what Christian organisation or church they want to commit themselves too or be a part of if any at all since there are thousands of Christians worldwide who simply fellowship with other Christian friends in their homes, coffee bars or wherever they are and manifest their faith in their everyday life. Water Baptism is an individual man or woman expressing their commitment to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ and not a baptism into any particular religious organisation or denomination. Repenting before God and believing in the Lord Jesus Christ is not dependent on being a member of a religious organisation or church (even though some may help many in the faith). We have to learn to trust God and not the institution it is God who saves the sinner and it is God who will keep them in Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit, churches obviously help in this role, but there can be a danger that we are trusting the church to keep the saved sinner more than we are trusting God's Holy Spirit.

THE GLOBAL AND WORLDWIDE CHURCH OF GOD

There is in the secular global world today a mindset that the church is a Sunday meeting in a religious building but the church should never be limited to the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings though they may form a part of the body of Christ they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes (as the early church did) to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with Him. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives. God is not limited to any one pattern or organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. In many third world countries church is held outside under a tree (for shade) with its members sitting on the dusty ground often with dogs, chooks and other animals roaming around. It is also important to be aware that the word church does not embrace everyone simply because they confess to be Christians (Matt 7:21-23). When the Bible uses the term church it primarily refers to those who belong to Christ and those who do the will of his Father. The will of God in this context is:

- Loving your Neighbour as yourself (Matt 22:37-39) (Mark 12:29-31).

In the New Testament this is called the, Royal Law (James 2:8) and means do-good to others. Those who deliberately harm people (especially those who belong to Christ) physically, financially, sexually, verbally, emotionally or spiritually and those who use others for their own selfish gain and greed are referred to by Christ himself as workers of iniquity. The Bible teaches that some will be cast out of God's Kingdom which means not everyone who confesses to know Christ is part of his church there are those in his present Kingdom who he calls wicked servants. They use his name and his gospel for their own selfish gain and line their own

greedy pockets with the wealth and riches of this world by making merchandise of those who do belong to Christ. Nevertheless, Jesus knows those who are his and those who are not and will not only reject anyone who uses his message of grace, mercy, compassion and love for their own selfish gain, but when he returns will deny them entry into his eternal Kingdom. (Matt 8:12) (Matt 22:13) (Matt 25:30).

Jesus said, "I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

Building God's church is not about financing opulent mega million dollar buildings, but rather about people gathering together to share their faith in any place they are able, nevertheless a building maybe required for practical purposes (i.e., the size of the congregation, protection from whether etc.), but if it is built from cleverly distorting Scriptures to manipulate money from faithful believers and by making them feel guilty if they don't give and borrowing such vast amounts of money that not only the oversight of that church, but also the congregation are put under financial oppression it is not in the will of God. Building God's church is about becoming more Christ like, and living in the will of God.

New Testament Christianity is fluid and not restricted to a particular building or even a special day. The Christianity Christ taught is so exciting and real, it cannot be contained. It has no limitations and overflows into every moment of a Christian's life; which means that, the New Testament church is global, moving and manifested in the lives of all those who are faithful and who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ.

THE GLOBAL FAMILY OF CHRIST

Since the Bible was written in an entirely different culture to ours and the body of Christ is a global family filled with people from different nations, countries, cultures, backgrounds, different levels of knowledge and education (especially religious) and its members are filled with various hurts and troubled pasts there is always going to be certain amount of Scripture we will all understand differently. Paul in the book of Romans tells us to avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine that he taught the brothers and sisters in Rome, but in the context of his letter the doctrines he has in mind are:

1. Doctrines that are contrary to the teaching that salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ contrasted to works of the law, self-effort and keeping religious customs and traditions etc.
2. Doctrines that are contrary to the truth that Jews and Gentiles who accept Christ become one nation in Christ, contrasted to them being two separate nations.
3. Doctrines that are contrary to godly behaviour and lead people away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the three major topics Paul has focused on in his letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome and the doctrines he has in his mind when he says be careful of those who cause divisions and create obstacles. Naturally within the global family of Christ there are many varied understandings of many Scripture, but not all teachings are important to know to be saved to eternal life nor does one have to have perfect understanding of every teaching of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation to know Christ and be in union with him, but they must understand the message of the bloodstained cross of Calvary and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be in the family of Christ and saved to eternal life, but should any teacher proclaim a message of works and self-effort to be

saved or teach that Jews and Gentiles are two separate groups/nations in Christ, or teach doctrines that lead people away from God's grace away from godly behaviour and away from Christ Paul says they should be avoided (Rom 16:17-19).

NOTE: though the visible global church in many regions has not presented a good reflection of Christ to the secular world, it should always be remembered that there are literally hundreds of thousands of humble Christian brothers and sisters in Christ spending their time helping the poor and the less fortunate, but sadly this type of news does not attract the attention of global T.V. or the world news since there is no profit to be made in Good News.

The body is the reflection of Christ on earth and therefore those who belong to it should be walking in the same Spirit of love, kindness, compassion and grace etc., that Christ walked in while on earth.

AN OVERALL DEFINITION OF THE CHURCH

The global church of God on earth is not buildings, but people who are devoted and faithful to the Lord Jesus Christ. It is the world-wide collective group of all (Jews and Gentiles) who belong to the Lord. The church in this present age is an invisible spiritual Kingdom existing now in the heart and mind of all who belong to Christ in every nation of the world. It is outwardly manifested by those who live a lifestyle that honours God and brings a good testimony to the name of the Lord Jesus Christ and collectively by the faithful global church. This present invisible Kingdom existing at this time in the hearts and minds of the faithful who love Christ will be literally manifested on earth to all the world when Christ returns (Luke 13:28-29). The church (the Kingdom of God) worldwide is not a perfect organisation as it is made up of sinners saved by grace struggling to overcome the natural limitations of the flesh (self, ego, pride, greed, lustful thoughts, jealousies, anger, envy, covetousness and such like things).

5

THE WONDERFUL GLORY OF CHRISTIAN SALVATION

Here is the wonderful glory of Christian salvation: "Sinners are saved by grace and not by their own self-effort." Over the years I have heard many (almost in horror) say, "That means everyone who believes in Christ can sin as much as they wish and use grace as an excuse." But this thinking is simply not true for the following two reasons:

1. No one who loves another deliberately does things to hurt or offend the one they love, likewise no faithful Christian who loves the Lord who laid his life down to a brutal, bloody and cruel death for them and experiences this love in their heart and mind deliberately lives a corrupt and wicked lifestyle, because they know it will offend the one they deeply love and because they from the heart do not want to bring a bad testimony to his name.
2. God sees the true intentions, motivations, hurts and struggles within our mind and our heart that underlie all our actions and behaviour in everything we do so whoever consciously and deliberately uses his grace as an excuse to sin or for their own gain and advantage will be judged accordingly.

When the Lord Jesus Christ returns all those, who belong to him will be made perfect in righteousness only then will the church (the body of Christ and Kingdom of God) be without error and weakness. Those who know God's love and grace through the Lord Jesus Christ go to church (in whatever form that might be) not to get saved but because they are saved and therefore enjoy being with others who have the same devotion, love and faith.

For further information see the title:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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