

30th of July 2017

Baptism – Pt 3 A doctrine of baptism according to man's wisdom.

In our previous study we established that – according to the scriptures “baptism” is immersing a person in water, does not include sprinkling of water on a baby's head, figuratively a person is buried with Christ by baptism and raised to walk in newness of life, and baptism of the Holy Ghost is the Spirit of God falling on a person. In this study we will establish the role of baptism from the Gospels and the book of Acts as used by the majority of the main-stream churches.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. Jesus' commission to His Jewish disciples included baptism.

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt.28: 19).

The Roman Catholic religion use our verse in Matthew (among others) as a reason to baptize Gentile believers today. They claim that this verse shows it is the Lord's will for a person to be baptized, and “it is necessary for salvation...” (Catech.1277). But are 1 billion Catholics right?

2. Jesus' disciples were taught to go preach His gospel and baptize believers.

“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 “ (Mk.16: 16).

Evangelists today often use this verse to preach the gospel and baptize. The problems with founding a doctrine of baptism for today solely on this verse are:-

- i) Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom of heaven (where Christ will reign on earth), whereas that is not the gospel that we preach in this age, and
- ii) those who believe **that** gospel “shall cast out devils; they shall speak with new tongues; take up serpents; and if they drink any deadly thing, it shall not hurt them...” (verses 17–18). Hence the context, which determines meaning, indicates a gospel for another age. For us to establish our doctrine of baptism from a context associated with another age would not be teaching what Paul called “good doctrine” (1Tim.4: 6).

3. Peter baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

“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” Acts 2: 38).

One of the texts that Mormons use for baptism being part of salvation is our verse from Acts 2: 38. Does a believer today receive remission of sins at baptism? – Catech,1263 and 1265 say yes.

Applying the teaching to our life today.

According to the Roman Catholic Catechism 1237 “The Lord himself affirms that Baptism is necessary for salvation” (their footnote is a reference to Jn.3: 5 which speaks of being “born of water and of the Spirit”, but the word “baptism” does not occur in the verse). Hence their church's doctrine has determined meaning, rather than the context. Therefore, their interpretation of Jn.3: 5 and corresponding doctrine cannot be that “which the Holy Ghost teacheth” (1Cor.2: 13).

Question to think about.

Roman Catholics, Mormons, and many evangelical churches today have their own private interpretation of scripture (2Pet.1: 20), and specifically on baptism. How does a person who simply believes God's words understand the role of baptism in the economy of salvation today?

My answer to our question from the scriptures.

Read the epistles that the apostle Paul wrote to the churches, and then together let us establish what Paul taught to the Gentile church for this, the age of the Gentiles (Rom.11: 26).