

Baptism

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Two by Two Baptism Beliefs

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The following article relative to the Two by Two beliefs about baptism has been distributed among its members

BAPTISM

Baptism is one of the great provisions, planned by God, for the good of his people. It is included in the last command of Jesus, Matthew 28:16-20, to be carried out 'unto the end of the world'. Baptism is not an optional step. It should not be looked upon as something to be put off until a more convenient season. It is one of the most important steps that we take in the way of salvation. One that requires very serious consideration.

Baptism, as it is taught in the Scripture, is not a form. It is not a matter of a person being immersed just because Jesus was, or because Jesus taught that we should be. Baptism is an act of burial, Romans 6:4. When we begin following the Lord, in his true way, it automatically separates us from our old manner of life and the things for which we were once living. Baptism is the act whereby that dead past is then buried behind us. **The following verses list some of the things that the Lord's people are encouraged to die to, or to turn their back upon: 1 Corinthians 11:14,15; 2 Corinthians 7:1; Eph. 4:22-32; 1 Timothy 2:8-10; Titus 2:11-14; 1 Peter 3:1-4; 1 John 2:15-17.**

Some of the above verses refer to ornaments. They speak of things that are superfluous as far as a child of God is concerned. The wedding ring is not considered an ornament. It is a symbol of a sacred vow, and is worn as a reminder of that vow. Ornamental rings, however, are superfluous and are among the ornaments that should be 'put off'. There is a reason for this. The end toward which the Lord has always labored is to make his people different. We are intended to be different in spirit, different in appearance, different in our manner of life, Exodus 33:16. This is what makes us a light in the world around us, Philippians 2:15. If we were like the world, which is living in darkness, there would be no light. Our only hope of being a light is by being different.

Baptism is also referred to as a planting, Romans 6:5. There is nothing very beautiful about a seed that is planted; the beauty is in the new life that comes forth. Likewise, there is nothing beautiful about our old manner of life, or its characteristics. But, when it is planted, there is something very beautiful about the new life that comes forth. This thought is brought out so well in Galatians 2:20; Colossians 2:12; and in Colossians 3:1-4.

In 1 Corinthians 10:1, 2, Paul used the Red Sea experience as a type of baptism. This presents the true order of baptism. God sent his two servants, Moses and Aaron, down to those people with the gospel of deliverance. Their response to that gospel brought them into touch with the Lamb, which was a type of Christ. It was this that saved them, Exodus 12:1-14. The next step was the Red Sea, which was their baptism. They passed through those waters, which closed in behind them, burying forever the things that had once held them in bondage.

The authority to baptize was given only to one type of ministry. The ones to whom Jesus gave this authority, in Matthew 28:16-20, were men who had been willing to follow Jesus in his Way. This is very important. No minister can bring you into anything more than what he has. The wrong kind of a minister, even though he may baptize by immersion, can only bring a person into the church that he, himself, is a part of. On the other hand, when one is baptized by a minister who is in fellowship with Jesus, he shares with them that same pure fellowship that he is enjoying, 1 John 1:3.