

Sinners are Re-connected to God through Re-creation in Christ, in Baptism

Few teachings of the Bible have stirred as much controversy as the subject of Baptism. For some groups Baptism is a “man-centred” ceremony. Consequently, Baptism is seen as little more than an outward act of man signifying his inner decision to accept Jesus, or God. For others, Baptism is “God entered,” because the Scriptures repeatedly state that only God, and never man, can both initiate and carry out the act of salvation (John 1:12-13; 6:44-45; Romans 9:16).

According to the Bible, Baptism is God’s miraculous saving act through which He both initiates and completes His saving act. Those who acknowledge the saving power of Baptism as taught in the Scriptures rejoice in this “washing of regeneration,” which gives life (Titus 3:5). Those who believe the Scriptural teaching of Baptism’s regenerative power also possess daily confidence in God’s gift of salvation to them. Their “God-centred” rescue from sin is a great assurance of life and hope since Baptism is built upon a changeless and gracious God, and not upon the uncertainty or fickleness of man.

FAITH OR WORKS?

In discussions regarding Baptism it is not unusual to hear someone say, “*A child cannot have faith, but an adult can.*” How foolish! If “faith” is something that can be “done,” or “accomplished,” by one age group and not another - by an adult but not a child - then faith is a result of the work of man, and not of the grace of God. Giving even the smallest credit to man for generating faith is a total contradiction to God’s Word. “*Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favour, but as what is due. But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness....*” (Romans 4:4-5). “*For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, that no one should boast,*” (Ephesians 2:8-9).

Some also try to discredit the saving power of Baptism as taught in the Bible by saying, “*But children cannot have a conscious faith.*” Believing such an idea would also mean that if a person became “unconscious,” he would then also lose his faith! After all, is not a Christian still a Christian when asleep and not conscious of being God’s child?

For a Christian, belief in the regenerative and saving power of Baptism is more than simply being correct in doctrine. It is much more! For a believer to realise, by faith, the power of Baptism is also to experience the power of Christ's resurrection (Romans 6:4-11; Philippians 3:10).

NEW POWER FOR LIFE

Let all discussion and debate regarding the regenerative power of Baptism be forever silenced by the clear teaching of God's holy Word. "*He saved us, not on the basis of deeds we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Saviour,*" (Titus 3:5-6). Then, instead of being stymied by endless dispute driven by doubt, faulty logic, or reasoning, let us instead go forth into life with great confidence in our Baptism and say, "*I can do all things through Him who strengthens me,*" (Philippians 4:13)!