

# *Redwater Restorer*

*"The voice of one crying in the wilderness..." (Matthew 3:3)*

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## *Is Baptism Essential To Salvation ?*

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### **Services:**

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AM Worship 10:45 a.m.  
PM Worship 5:00 p.m.

Wednesday  
Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

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If one were to sit down and read his New Testament without carrying all of the denominational baggage that usually accumulates during our lives here, he would have no trouble at all understanding that baptism is, indeed, essential to the salvation of the immortal soul of man. However, since what we have just suggested is not very likely the case, at least not here in the United States, it is necessary again to set forth some arguments to prove that in order to be saved from past sins, and in eternity, it is absolutely essential for a penitent believer in Jesus Christ to experience immersion in water in order to be saved. Those who believe in salvation by faith only, or by grace only, have denied for four or five hundred years that baptism is part of the salvation that God presents by grace through faith. And though this denial has been at the very heart of many sermons and debates in the religious world, the New Testament of our Lord and Savior has not changed its teaching upon this subject, or on any other so far as that is concerned, in the last two thousand years. And when all is said and done, and the last denial of God's truth upon this subject has been shouted from the housetops, the Bible will still say what it has always said, and man will still be accountable to what the Bible says regardless of all of the theology that may be spun by man upon earth.

Rather than approaching this subject in the manner that we usually do, and there is nothing wrong with that, we have chosen to demonstrate the essential nature of baptism for the remission of sins by asking a series of questions, which are designed, we hope, to get us to see and understand what the Bible plainly says.

The first question we wish to ask is: Would our Lord Jesus Christ **require** a thing of mankind which is unessential or unnecessary to our spiritual well being? On the day that our Lord resurrected from the dead, he gave his apostles the following command:

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to

every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:15-16, NKJV).

No language ever recorded by man, or spoken upon this earth is more easily understood than this. Jesus said if a person wants to be saved, there are two things that he must do: (1) He must believe, that is, he must believe in Jesus Christ the Son of God and Savior of the world. (2) He must be immersed in water (that is what baptism is). When he has done that, Jesus said, he will be saved. Usually when this passage is advanced to show the necessity of baptism, someone will come up with the quibble that Jesus did not say he believes not and is baptized not shall be condemned, only he who believes not, so baptism is unessential to salvation. That certainly is a convoluted kind of reasoning because there never has been a person on the earth that did not believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God who wanted to be baptized in order to be saved. The last thing a nonbeliever in Christ would have on his mind would be baptism. Jesus, in this passage, said that it takes two things to save a person, faith and baptism, but it only takes one thing for a person to be lost and that is no faith. The above convoluted argument in no way reflects upon the necessity of baptism for salvation; it only throws up a smoke screen to keep honest seekers after salvation from seeing what Jesus plainly said, and because we most often accept some preacher's interpretation of the Bible rather than what the Bible plainly says, we have been fooled by this smoke screen.

The second question we wish to ask is: If baptism is unessential to salvation, why did the apostle Peter tell three thousand people, on the day of Pentecost, that in order for them to receive the remission of their sins they had to "repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit?" (Acts 2:38)? If the remission of sins of which Peter speaks in this passage is predicated upon repentance, and it is,

## Is Baptism Essential To Salvation ? (Cont.)

then it is also predicated upon being baptized by the authority of Jesus Christ. Some will accept the repentance, but they reject the baptism because of prejudice against what the Word of God plainly says. If you do not need to be baptized in order to receive the remission of sins, then you do not need to repent, because the same rule of logic that removes one removes the other. Yet, to be best of our knowledge, no one takes the position that one can be saved from sin and not repent of his sins! The Holy Spirit, who caused Peter to speak upon this occasion said, "repent and let every one of you be baptized." What mere man dares challenge the Holy Spirit?

The third question we wish to ask is: If baptism is unessential to salvation, why did an apostle of Christ say that it saves? "There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). Baptism is the antitype of the salvation of Noah and his family by water, as was set forth in the previous verses. No amount of wrangling over whether Noah was saved in the water or out of the water will reduce the strength of this God-breathed language. Baptism is the antitype of the salvation of Noah and his family by the waters of the flood, and as such, it "now saves us." One can deny this until he turns blue, and when all is said and done, the verse will still say, "there is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism..." Now, why would the great apostle Peter, the same apostle who commanded believers who had murdered Christ to repent and be baptized on the Day of Pentecost, say that baptism "now saves us," if, indeed, that is not the truth? That appeals to neither rhyme nor reason! Again, by arguing about what the "good conscience" of this passage is, and by arguing about whether Noah was saved in the water or out of the water, many have sought to deny what the passage plainly says. And when the last argument and quibble has been made by the last man on the earth, the "everlasting gospel" will still say what it has always said, and that is that we cannot be saved unless with believing, penitent hearts we allow our bodies to be immersed in the grave of baptism. For two thousand years now, this verse has said what it says, and when twenty thousand years have passed by, unless the translation is deliberately corrupted, the passage will still say the same. And when the Day of Judgment finally arrives, the passage will still read the same, and we will be judged by what it says, and not by

what we wanted it to say!

If we were to investigate every case of conversion found in the great Book of Acts, we would find, without exception, in every case of conversion that either the person(s) was baptized, or he was commanded to be baptized. How strange it is that we are unable to accept the plain truth of God's divinely inspired Word. The reason we do not accept the plain truth of Holy Scripture is because Satan does not want us to be saved, and so he throws every stumbling block he has in our path, and one of those stumbling blocks is our allowing the clergy to tell us what they think the Bible says rather than our reading it for ourselves what it actually says. When it comes to the plan of salvation, the teaching of the Scripture is so plain, and so easily understood that we must have help to misunderstand what the Sacred Book has to say. We urge that every reader take the Word of God for what it says, and humbly and faithfully obey what it says that it may be well with our souls in time and in eternity. Baptism is essential to salvation, and it is essential because God says that it is. Do you trust God? Then take him at his Word! Do not let any person tell you that God does not have the ability to let us know what we must do to be saved.

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