

Is Baptism Essential For Salvation? (No. 15)

By Casey Head

Since March, I have included a new article on the necessity of baptism in almost every issue of the Mitchell News-Journal. I began by addressing some of the common objections, and then I began to examine the numerous New Testament passages which unquestionably establish the necessity of water baptism for salvation. In the last two articles, I contrasted the many forms of denominational baptism with biblical baptism. I believe I have built a solid case using scripture.

This series of articles was jump-started by a very controversial “back-and-forth” on the editorial page among citizens of Mitchell County and myself. Many people, including preachers, voiced their disagreement by writing letters to the editor, or by submitting an anonymous rant. I know that this is a very religious area, and that almost everyone in this county is a believer. Furthermore, I know that a majority of these religious people -- a vast majority -- disagree vehemently with what I have taught concerning the necessity of baptism for salvation. But I want you to consider this point...since this whole discussion began in March, not a single preacher has contacted me and only a small handful of people even called me at all (I could probably count them on one hand). Does that concern you as it concerns me?

Folks, as I have stated in the past, we're not debating whether or not we ought to install plush or Berber carpet in the church buildings. That's an insignificant issue! But is God's plan of salvation an insignificant issue? Of course not! Yet that is how this has been treated by so many of the people of this community. Some have said, “Let's not argue,” but I'm not here to argue...I'm here to promote Bible study on a topic of disagreement. Others have said, “We're wasting time when we ought to be trying to win sinners to Christ,” but folks, that is the point of contention- *HOW* to win sinners to Christ. If you're teaching a false plan of salvation, then you're not winning sinners to Christ. Can't you see that this is an extremely important issue? Surely, you can!

But if this issue is so important, then again I ask- why haven't any of the local preachers who disagree called me for a Bible study? Why haven't they agreed to a public debate? I'm not talking about a hateful argument. What I'm talking about is an honest Bible study carried out in mutual love and respect! Why not ask your pastor to give me a call? See if he will do it. Jesus pointed out the sins of the scribes and Pharisees (Mt. 23). Paul openly disagreed with those who were teaching error (Ac. 15:1-2). The early Christians were told over and over again to confront religious error and to deal with false teachers (1 Tim. 1:3; 1 Pet. 3:15). So why, in today's world, do we shy away from all religious debates and disagreements? The early Christians were adamant about the truth, and we should be, too!

In closing, I want to ask you a very important question. Are you saved? Have you believed in Christ, repented of your sins, confessed your faith in Christ and been baptized for the remission of sins unto salvation? This is what one must do to become a Christian (Mk. 16:16; Ac. 2:37-38; Rom. 6:3-7; Gal. 3:27; Col. 2:12; 1 Pet. 3:21). It may not be what denominations are teaching today, and it may not be what you were taught as a child, but it is undoubtedly what the New Testament teaches regarding salvation! Won't you accept it?

This concludes my series of articles on baptism. If you have any questions, comments or disagreements, please contact me. I want to hear from you. My phone number is (828)467-1463 and my email address is NCBibleQuestions@yahoo.com. Also, you can find all of these articles at our website, www.LookingToJesus.com.