



The Divine Importance of Baptism

--By Harold Buckles

We are witnessing a very strange set of religious beliefs now. Professing Christians are perfectly willing to accept what Christ taught, and what the apostles practiced, concerning faith and repentance.

Many balk, however, and even rebel on baptism. The following analysis will help you to understand the problem, and what should be done.

CHRIST SAID:

"Ye believe in God, believe also in Me." **John 14:1**

THE APOSTLES PRACTICED:

Faith is essential for salvation – **Hebrews 11:6**

CHRIST SAID:

"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish" **Luke 13:3**

THE APOSTLES PRACTICED:

Repentance is essential for salvation – **Acts 17:30**

CHRIST SAID:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" **Mark 16:16**

THE APOSTLES PRACTICED:

Baptism is essential for salvation – **Acts 22:16, Colossians 2:12**

Christ spoke with the same authority and emphasis on baptism as He did on faith and repentance. God has said for us to "hear Him" – **Matthew 17:5**.

Therefore, everything Christ taught is both important and **essential**.

The following analysis should help.

Which is the Most Important Leg of a 3-Legged Stool?

Silly question? No! Read on.

Over and over I have taught "the whole counsel of God" on the plan of salvation. I found that these people would usually accept faith and repentance as essential to salvation, but question baptism.

So, I would prop three fingers of one hand on my Bible and ask the above question. I was trying to get the person to say, "All three are of equal importance."

However, one summer afternoon as I was teaching in a home, their young daughter was going in and out of the house. She was back in just as I made the "tripod" of my three fingers on my Bible and asked, "Which is the most important leg of a 3-legged stool?"

The girl's mother sat with a puzzled look and groped for an answer. Suddenly, the child spoke up and said, "Oh mother, I know—the one that is missing!"

How true. No one could sit on a 3-legged stool if one leg was gone. Incidentally, I thought that child's answer was a good one, and I have used it since that time.

THREE IMPORTANT QUESTIONS:

1 – What good is faith and baptism if **REPENTANCE** is missing?

Absolutely worthless! This we see everywhere, "Baptized HELLIANS" who indulge in the same sins as they did before their "conversion". The problem? There has been such a small amount of preaching on repentance that many church folks hardly know that it is one of Christ's **COMMANDS**.

2 – What good is repentance and baptism if **FAITH** is missing?

This would reduce Christianity to an empty formalism. This would eliminate all the joy of obedience, and make **ROBOTS** of the professed followers of Christ.

3 – What good is faith and repentance if **BAPTISM** is left out?

This is the popular form of religion now. Preachers **LEAVE OUT** part of the Bible plan of salvation find themselves in a dilemma.

“How does one know he is really saved?”

Sermons are preached, letters are written, and entire books have been published, trying to convince each other that they REALLY believed and were saved. But always there is that doubt, that question, and that definite LACK of assurance.

CHRIST'S WAY – THE ONLY WAY

You could come as near deciding which was the most important leg of a 3-legged stool as you could deciding which was the most important of Faith, Repentance, or Baptism.

But WHY would anyone even try to decide which one was the most important?

Why would anyone try to eliminate ANYTHING that Christ required? The answer should be evident – The devil does everything he can do to keep people from a right relationship to the Blood of Christ!

“...Let us reason together...” Isaiah **1:18b**

There is always a REASON behind everything Christ commanded. If you can name one case otherwise please let me know at once!

1 – Through **FAITH** in Christ, we lose our love for sin.

Oh yes, we may be tricked into sin in some way, but we get no “kick” out of it. Believe in Christ wholeheartedly, and sin loses its glitter and glamour. **I John 3:9**

2 – Through **REPENTANCE** towards sin, we quit practicing sin.

The lost soul plans his drinking, his weekend adultery (shack-ups) etc. The Christian plans NOT to sin, and stays as far away from it as possible. **II Corinthians 7:9-11**

3 – Through **BAPTISM** into Christ, we enter a new relationship with our Lord.

Our sins are now washed away - **Acts 22:16, Hebrews 10:22**

We receive the Holy Spirit - **Acts 2:38, 5:32**

This is the beginning of true sanctification.

Those who are Scripturally baptized realize great JOY. **Acts 8:39, 16:34**

THE NEXT MOVE IS UP TO YOU!

We have represented the evidence in the very best way we know how.

Where do YOU fit in? At what point did you stop? (or did you?)

Have you put your **FAITH** in Christ, **REPENTED** of all sin, and admitted (**CONFESSED**) it?

Were you Scripturally **BAPTIZED** – the right way for the right purpose?

If not, begin where you left off and **OBEY CHRIST (Hebrews 5:7)** for salvation.

TOMORROW MAY BE TOO LATE!

Have you done this? Good.

And are you living faithfully for Christ, led of the Spirit (**Romans 8:12-14**), according to God's Word?

Yes? Then remain faithful, so you may be kept by God's power. **I Peter 1:5-7**