

News & Notes

Sunday, September 28, 2008

Remember in Prayer: Daryl Alberson; Michelle Allen; Arland Anderson; Mary Bailey; Johnny Carr; Mary Childers; Vikie Cobb; Virginia Harden; Diana Hayes; Bobby Hopkins; Lettie Mae Hunt; Dot Ketchum; Earl Liming; John and Deliah Mann; Diane Mize; Michael Owens; Alva Powell; Ann Ray; Brandon Ray; Wayne Robbins; Katherine Shaw; Calvin Ursery; Joan Wilderson; Alvie Williford;

Pantry item for the month of September is dryer sheets.

Ashland Events: Today: Elder's meeting at 4:00 PM;

Area Events: October 3: The Benton-Tippah County Freed-Hardeman University Associates will have a spaghetti supper and bake sale at the Tippah county fairgrounds from 3:30 to 6:30 PM (tickets are \$6.00); October 4: Ladies day at the Batesville church of Christ;

Sermon in Preview:

AM: Guest Speaker

PM: Last-Sunday-of-the-month singing

For the Record (September 21, 2008):

Attendance: 76 Contribution: \$2302.00 Budget: \$1452.00

The Ashland Church of Christ

P. O. Box 25

Ashland, MS 38603-0025

www.ashlandcoc.org

acoc@ashlandcoc.org

Sunday:

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Worship 10:30 AM

Worship 5:00 PM

Wednesday:

Bible Study 7:00 PM

Shepherds:

Barney King

Jeff Roberson

Carrol Street

Romans 11:33

ASHLAND ANNOUNCER

Increasing in the Knowledge of God



Taught Wrong and Baptized Right?

Wayne Jones

Under the banners of acceptance and "unity," many in the Lord's church have developed an open door policy with members of the denominational world. Many, by their own admission, have chosen not to "question" a person's claim to salvation or even method of salvation when they leave a denomination to become a member of the Lord's church. Some have even adopted this idea when it comes to denominational baptism. How can this be? Is it possible to be instructed under a false system and to be baptized for the wrong reasons and still be saved as a result? Can a person be taught incorrectly and baptized correctly?

While all of us might be quick with a response that is based on opinion and supposition, we should be careful in answering this question. Our caution in answering will allow us to consider what the Bible has to say on the matter. Does the Bible teach that a person can be taught wrong and baptized right?

First, it must be understood that baptism is **not the only** step in God's plan to save man. Man's response to God's grace must begin in the mind. Man must realize that he is lost in sin, just like those on Pentecost realized their condition

(Acts 2:37). Once a person realizes his spiritual condition, he must also understand that Christ (the only begotten Son of God) is the only source for relief of the burden of sin (Acts 4:12).

Consider for a moment the account of Philip and the eunuch as recorded in Acts 8:26-39. When the eunuch realized that he was lost, he inquired about baptism (8:36). Phillip responded by saying, "If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest" (8:37). If baptism was the only step in the eunuch's salvation, there would be no need for verse 37. However, Philip understood that unless the eunuch understood some things and was convicted of some things, then baptism would only get him wet.

The same is true in the case of the Jews in Acts 2. When those present asked the apostles what they needed to do in order to have the sin removed from their record, Peter's response was two-fold. According to Acts 2:38, Peter told them to repent and be baptized. While baptism is an action that can be seen on the outside, repentance is a step in God's plan for salvation that is primarily mental. When a person repents, he changes his mind based on what he knows about God, His Word, and His plan for man's salvation. Peter realized that unless these men and women were willing to make a mental decision to turn from Judaism, then being immersed in water would do them no good.

Peter and Philip realized that baptism was not the only step in God's plan for the salvation of mankind. In fact, both of these men realized that baptism would only benefit those who were thinking correctly. It is for this reason that both Peter and Philip took the time to verbally teach their audiences the Word of God. It is the Word that produces

faith (Rom. 10:17) and is an understanding of that Word that leads us to repentance (2 Cor. 7:10).

Perhaps the clearest example of this is found in Acts 19. As this chapter opens, Paul comes to Ephesus and realizes that some of the Ephesians had been baptized by Apollos after hearing his teaching. According to the later portion of chapter 18, Apollos was teaching the baptism of John after the cross of Christ. John (the baptizer) taught repentance and baptism because Christ **was going to** die and establish His kingdom. However, after the cross the apostles were teaching repentance and baptism because Christ **had already** died and established His kingdom. Apparently, those in Ephesus had been taught John's baptism on the wrong side of the cross. They were sincere and at one time the doctrine that they were taught was correct. However, at the time it was taught to them it was outdated. Paul realized this when those in Ephesus had not even heard of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit (19:2) which took place on Pentecost. Did Paul say, "Well, as long as you are comfortable with it, I won't question your baptism"? No, that was not Paul's attitude at all. In fact, notice what Acts 19:4-5 reveals that Paul did. He taught them the truth and the men were baptized with the correct thinking. Could those in Ephesus be taught wrong, but baptized right? Apparently, the answer is no.

Has the doctrine of God changed since Acts 19? Has God's plan to save man been divinely altered since the days of Acts 2, 8 or 19? No, dear friends, it has not. God still demands that for baptism to be scriptural and effective, the one who is being baptized must understand why he is being baptized. Incorrect thinking and understanding will lead to an incorrect baptism. May we never provide false hope to someone under the banners of acceptance and "unity."