

## FOR PREACHING THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM

### I. Acts 2:38.

- A. This passage is probably the most hotly contested passage in the New Testament when dealing with the subject of baptism.
- B. Here is a denominational view of this verse: Listen to what one denominational writer said about this passage: “ The grammar of the verse indicates that only repentance is required to receive the remission of sins. Here is my translation of the verse from the Greek, using some extra words to bring out some key differences not observable in the English text: "Repent [you, plural], and let each one [singular] of you be baptized [singular], upon the name of Jesus Christ into the remission of sins, and you will receive [you, plural] the gift of the Holy Spirit." The command to repent and the promise to receive are both plural verbs. The command to be baptized is singular. The imperative ("let each one of you be baptized") is parenthetical. Peter's actual command was: "Repent . . . upon the name of Jesus Christ into the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." Peter gave the audience only one thing to do in order to receive the remission of sins. There was only one direct command: "Repent [you, plural]."
  - 1. Notice that baptism gets completely omitted from the explanation given of this verse.
  - 2. Another writer stated, “We repent "for the remission of sins" to receive the forgiveness of sins.”
- C. The most contested part of this verse is the word the Greek word that is translated “for.”
  - 1. Denominational writers say that “eis,” which is the Greek word, means “because of.”
  - 2. The problem with that is there is another Greek word that is translated “because of” and in nearly every Greek Lexicon you find, “eis” means, “in or into or toward.”
- D. In other words, one must repent and be baptized towards, or to enter the state of or obtain, the forgiveness of sins.
  - 1. One denominational writer used the wonderful logic of defining a Greek word with the way we use the English word.
  - 2. We must be very careful how we go about defining words.
- E. The Greek word “eis” is always looking forward in order to obtain something and not backward as doing something to show something already accomplished when it’s used.
- F. The word “and” is a conjunction that joins things of equal value.
- G. In Acts 2:38, repent and be baptized are of equal value.
  - 1. One without the other is useless.
  - 2. Both are necessary to obtain the forgiveness of sins.

### II. 1 Corinthians 1:17.

- A. You might be thinking that this is an odd verse to use to show the lack of need to be baptized in order to be saved.

- B. As I studied for this lesson, I came across numerous references from denominational teachers that used this verse to show baptism isn't necessary for salvation.
  - 1. For instance, one wrote: "If water baptism was a requirement for salvation Christ would have sent Paul the apostle to baptize. However, Paul was not sent to water baptize but to preach the gospel of which water baptism is not an essential element."
  - 2. This sums up every other use of this verse I saw.
- C. In conjunction, many will use Matthew 4:1-3 where we are told that Jesus did not baptize others, only the disciples.
  - 1. Those who hold the position of the unessential nature of baptism ask why Jesus didn't baptize people if it was important.
  - 2. The argument is used to try and show that Jesus and Paul didn't baptize so it must not be vital.
- D. What is important about these two passages is that the one doing the baptizing is not important.
  - 1. There was a great problem already in Corinth of division.
  - 2. Part of the problem there was that some claimed superiority because of who baptized them.
  - 3. Could you imagine the claim someone could make if the Lord Himself had baptized them?
- E. Paul never discounted baptism.
  - 1. Every mention of people conversion after Paul preached the gospel ended with the baptism of the convert.
  - 2. Paul likened baptism to obeying a form of the death, burial and resurrection of our Lord (Romans 6:3-4).
  - 3. It is Paul that said we are "buried" in baptism with Christ (Colossians 2:14).

### III. **John 3:3-7.**

- A. This is a record of a conversation between Jesus and Nicodemus, a member of the Sanhedrin Council.
- B. It seems that Nicodemus had come to talk to Jesus about who He was.
  - 1. Instead of this subject, Jesus told him he needed to be born again.
  - 2. Nicodemus didn't understand the spiritual lesson Jesus was teaching and could only think in physical terms.
- C. Jesus told Nicodemus that he had to be born of water and the Spirit.
- D. Here is the argument that a denominationalist would make: "Being "born of water" refers to natural birth, as Jesus mentioned being "born of the flesh". Water baptism was not spoken of here and was not the topic of discussion."
  - 1. The same writer wrote, "Examine the context of words... born of water = that which is born of flesh is flesh = (first) time in mother's womb; born of the Spirit = that which is born of the Spirit is spirit = born again.
  - 2. He and others believe that the water is that of the fluid that is present at birth and Spirit is baptism of the Holy Spirit.

- E. They don't understand that Jesus is making a spiritual point.
  - 1. Notice that being born of water and the Spirit is after except in verse 5.
  - 2. Jesus did not say that you had first to be born of water, human birth, and except you are born of the Spirit.
  - 3. The word except is forceful: except you do both, you won't enter kingdom of God.
  - 4. Notice these uses of the word "except" (Luke 13:3; John 15:4; Acts 27:31)
  - 5. Unless both are done, there is no way to enter the kingdom.
- F. The idea is that one must be born of water, baptized, and of the Spirit, by the teaching of the Spirit.
  - 1. Titus 3:5 is a commentary on this passage.
  - 2. Even in John 3 and the beginning of 4, John and the disciples of Jesus were baptizing people.