

SCRIPTURE READING: Matthew 28:16-20.

INTRODUCTION:

We often discuss what baptism can do. For example, baptism can result in:

1. Our becoming a possession of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Matthew 28:19.
2. Our salvation. Mark 16:16A; 1 Peter 3:21A.
3. The forgiveness of our sins. Acts 2:38.
4. The washing away of our sins. Acts 22:16.
5. Our being added to the body of Christ. 1 Corinthians 12:13A.
6. Our putting on Christ. Galatians 3:27.
7. Etc.



However, in this morning's lesson we are going to talk about some things baptism does not do. Very recently someone was asking me questions that made it clear that this is a very important lesson. I hope it glorifies God and is a blessing to us all.

DISCUSSION:

1. **BAPTISM DOES NOT ALWAYS SAVE.** Yes, baptism is essential to salvation. But, it is not the only essential thing. For baptism to result in salvation, we must first:
 - A. **Believe with all our heart that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and believe in our heart that God has raised Him from the dead.** Acts 8:36-38; Romans 10:9-10.
 - B. **Confess with our mouth the Lord Jesus.** Romans 10:9-10; Acts 8:36-38.
 - C. **Repent, i.e. turn from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God.** Acts 2:38; 3:19; Romans 6:1-4, 6A, 11.
 - D. **Intend to be saved as a result of being baptized.** Many people are baptized thinking they have already been saved. However, to be saved we must be baptized for the right reason, i.e. in order to be saved. Acts 2:38.
 - E. **Be immersed in water.** Baptism that saves is immersion in water.
2. **BAPTISM DOES NOT CHANGE SOMETHING WRONG INTO SOMETHING RIGHT.**
 - A. Baptism can result in the washing away of our sins, but it does not change something wrong into something right. In other words, if something is sinful **before** we are baptized, it is still just as sinful **after** we are baptized. If we repent of a sin and we are baptized, we are forgiven of that sin. However, if we commit the same sin after we are baptized, we must repent again if we want to be forgiven again.
 - B. **Illustration.** Stealing is sinful before a person is baptized and it is just as sinful after a person is baptized. 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Ephesians 4:28. If a jewel thief repents of his sin and is baptized, he is forgiven of that sin. However, if he steals again after he is baptized he must repent again if he wants to be forgiven again. Also, being baptized does not mean a former jewel thief can now keep his previously stolen property. Ezekiel 33:14-16.
 - C. Consider also polygamy, homosexuality.
 - D. It is in the context of divorce and remarriage that people often make the mistake of falsely assuming that baptism changes something wrong into something right. Matthew 19:3-12. Some people mistakenly think that individuals who are unscripturally remarried and therefore living in adultery **before** baptism, may remain married **after** baptism because baptism sanctifies the sexual relationship. This is simply not true. If a sexual relationship with someone is wrong before baptism it is wrong after baptism. God will forgive this sin, but only if the sinner repents, the fruit of which will be the end of the sexual relationship.

3. **BAPTISM DOES NOT GUARANTEE SALVATION.**

- A. While initial salvation is conditioned on being baptized, final salvation is conditioned on other things subsequent to baptism. Colossians 1:21-23; Acts 8:13, 18-24.
- B. Even though we have been baptized, we can still lose our souls. Galatians 3:26-27; 5:1-4; Hebrews 10:26-31; 2 Peter 2:20-22.

4. **BAPTISM DOES NOT SOLVE ALL OF THE PROBLEMS OF LIFE.**

- A. Some people mistakenly think that baptism will solve all their problems in life. So, when problems—whether marriage problems, money woes, bad habits, or whatever—remain after baptism, many people give up on Christianity, wrongly concluding that the Lord has failed them.
- B. Christianity will immediately save us from some problems in life and it will eventually save us from some other problems in life, but it will never save us from all problems in life. 2 Corinthians 11:23-28.
- C. The blessing of Christianity is not found in escaping all problems in life. Rather, it is found in giving them meaning and purpose; it is found in the spiritual growth we experience by facing them and dealing with them as God instructs. Romans 5:3-4; James 1:2-4. 2 Corinthians 12:7-10.
- D. Having to face problems in life is not a sign that God has failed us. Rather, it's proof that He loves us. Hebrews 12:3-11.

CONCLUSION: Baptism can do some wonderful things for us. Let's just make sure we don't overstate its blessings.