



A Thought about Baptism (I Peter 3:21)

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Thus far in this series, we have discussed Jesus' command to be baptized in Mark 16:16. We noted Peter's answer to those who asked what to do to be saved in Acts 2:38.

We showed that the thief on the cross is not a proper example for us living today. We demonstrated that baptism is where one contacts the blood of Christ that saves (Romans 6:3-4) and that baptism is how one gets into Christ (Galatians 3:26-27), where salvation is (II Timothy 2:10). Yet many deny that baptism is necessary for salvation. Many do so because of a misunderstanding of I Corinthians 1:17 (which we will discuss in our next article). Note: all our past articles are archived on our website at: <http://www.wjchurchofchrist.org/html/articles.html>.

One person once said, "If only the Bible just came right out and said that baptism saves, I would believe." The Bible does. "The like figure whereunto *even* **baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (I Peter 3:21). The person who made the above statement upon reading this passage responded by saying, "I see it, but I don't believe it!" They were dishonest with God's Word! Many are not even aware these words are in the Bible. The word "figure" is used to make a comparison; just as Noah was "saved by water" (verse 20), Peter points out that "baptism doth also now save us."

Noah was not saved from water, but by the water; he was saved from the wickedness and corruption that was in the world (Genesis 6:5-7). The parenthetical statement explains that baptism is a spiritual cleansing, not a physical one; baptism washes away our sins (Acts 22:16). I am not saying that the Bible teaches that it is the water that saves (or even baptism alone); however, it is where we contact the blood of Christ that does save. God put water in the plan; who can argue with God?

With an understanding that men today teach that salvation comes at the very moment of faith, without any further acts of obedience (including obedience to Jesus' command to be baptized) read the following passage from your own Bible (please be honest) – I Peter 3:21:

"Baptism doth also NOW save us."

"Baptism doth also NOT save us."

Now, read Jesus' words in Mark 16:16:

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved."

"He that believeth and is saved shall be baptized."

Are you willing to be honest with both yourself and God's Word and accept His commandments for the purpose He has given them? Jesus has commanded us to have faith in Him (John 8:24), to repent of our sins (Luke 13:3), confess Him as the Christ (Matthew 10:32-33) and to be baptized in order to be saved (Mark 16:16). If you would like to know more about these commands to become a Christian, or if you would like to enroll in a correspondence course by mail (no cost or obligation to you), please return this coupon to: Back To The Bible; 221 Barnett Street; West Jefferson, NC 28694 or visit us online at: www.wjchurchofchrist.org.

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