

Baptism Not Commanded

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(Matthew 28:19)

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(1Corinthians 1:14, 17)

Baptism was pre-figured in both the ceremonial washings associated with the animal sacrifice system, and through Israel's baptism in the Red Sea during the time of Moses.

Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that **all our fathers** were under the cloud (Nu. 12:5), all **passed through the (Red) Sea, ²all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea** (1Cor. 10:1-2; NKJV used throughout unless otherwise noted; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

In the seventh chapter of 1Corinthians, the Apostle Paul was dealing with various aspects of marriage and divorce in the early church. He pointed out that a converted spouse should do their best to remain married to their unconverted mate, because there is always the possibility that God might be in the process of calling the unconverted person. Therefore, the converted member was admonished to set a good example through righteous conduct and communication.

For how do you know, O wife, whether you will (be an instrument through which God works to) save your husband? Or (in the case of a converted man) how do you know, O husband, whether you will (be an instrument through which God works to) save your wife (1Cor. 7:16; Ed. notes in parentheses)?

Not only was there the possibility that an unconverted spouse could be called to

repentance and baptism through the righteous conduct of a converted spouse, but also the children of that marriage could be called to repentance when they reached maturity.

And a (converted) woman who has a husband who does not believe, if he is willing to live with her, let her not divorce him. ¹⁴For the unbelieving husband is sanctified (set apart) by the (converted) wife, and the unbelieving wife is sanctified (set apart) by the (converted) husband; otherwise your children would be unclean (in a spiritual sense), but now (providing the parents remain married) they (the children of that marriage) are holy (by association with the converted parent; cf. Rom. 7:12; 2Pet. 3:11) (1Cor. 13-14; Ed. notes in parentheses).

In these instructions that Paul was giving to married couples, there was no mention of baptism for the unconverted spouse or children because neither were ready to repent and be baptized. In fact, based on God's word, a child is regarded as being the responsibility of his/her parents until they reach the age of twenty. Therefore, even if a child is being called by God, they should not consider baptism until they are twenty years old. At that point, they can begin taking responsibility for their decisions and actions.

Everyone included among those who are numbered, from twenty years old and above, shall give an offering to the Lord (Ex. 30:14; cf. 38:26; Lev. 27:3; Nu. 1:3-45; 14:29; 26:2-4; 32:11).

This is one of the reasons that infant baptism is invalid. Also, baptism is a very serious matter and anyone considering baptism must "count the cost" because living in accordance with God's word is not an easy task in this present evil age (Gal. 1:4), and children are not mature enough to make such a serious decision.

If anyone comes to me (Christ) and does not hate his father and mother, wife and children, brothers and sisters, yes, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. ²⁷And whoever does not bear his cross (Gr. stauros; wooden stake; symbolic of hardship and even martyrdom in some cases) and come after me cannot be my disciple. ²⁸For which of you, intending to build a tower, does not sit down first and count the cost, whether he has enough to finish it – ²⁹lest, after he has laid the foundation, and is not able to finish it, all those who see it begin to mock him, ³⁰saying, 'This man began to build and was not able to finish.' ³¹Or what king, going to make war against another king, does not sit down first and consider whether he is able with ten thousand to meet him who comes with twenty thousand? ³²Or else, while the other is still a great way off, he sends a delegation and asks conditions of peace. ³³So likewise, **whoever of you does not forsake all that he has cannot be my disciple** (Lk. 14:26-33; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Following Christ's death and resurrection, those who repent of their sins are to be baptized as commanded.

Then he (Christ) said to them (the disciples), 'Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and rise from the dead the third day, ⁴⁷and that **repentance and remission** (forgiveness) **of sins should be preached in his** (Christ's) **name to all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem (Jn. 24:46-47; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Now when they (repentant sinners) heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, 'Men and brethren, what shall we do?' ³⁸Then Peter said to them, '**Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ** for the remission (forgiveness) of sins; and you shall

receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Ac. 2:37-38; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

Anyone who does not follow the commands regarding repentance and baptism will not receive God's Holy Spirit (see study: Baptism).

Now when the apostles who were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent Peter and John to them, ¹⁵who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit. ¹⁶For as yet It (God's Holy Spirit) had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. ¹⁷**Then they** (Peter and John) laid hands on them (repentant individuals), **and they received the Holy Spirit** (Ac. 8:14-17; Ed. notes in parentheses; emphasis added).

As there was no mention in 1Corinthians 1:14-17 of repentance, baptism, or the laying on of hands, any claim that an unconverted spouse can receive God's Holy Spirit without being baptized is false. Also, any claim that a child can receive God's Holy Spirit is also contrary to scripture; apart from those God predestines for a specific office or service.

For he (John the Baptizer) will be great in the sight of the Lord, and shall drink neither wine nor strong drink. **He will also be filled with the Holy Spirit, even from his mother's womb** (Lk. 1:15; Ed. note in parenthesis; emphasis added).

In 1Corinthians 1:14-17, Paul was not addressing anyone called by God from their mother's womb. Nor were the unconverted spouses or their children in possession of God's Holy Spirit. Therefore, claiming 1Corinthians 1:14-17 is proof that baptism is not required, in order to receive God's Holy Spirit, is fallacious and God will judge accusations such as this accordingly (Mt. 12:36).

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