

# The Apostolic Doctrine of Water Baptism

## Part 4

Let's look at the parable of the rich man and the beggar, **Luke 16**. After it was too late for the rich man; he pleaded to send Lazarus back to warn his brethren of their coming fate.

**Matthew 7:21-23, 21** *Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity.*

**John 15:14** *Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you.*

To this Abraham replied, they have Moses and the prophets; let them hear them; If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

The reference to Moses and the prophets, represents the law and the prophets, in other words, if they wouldn't hear the word of God, then there was no hope for them.

We are no different today, if we neglect to read and study the Bible and refuse to obey the instructions of salvation, then there is no hope for us outside of these scriptures.

**He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.**

Here is a quote from an article that states baptism is not necessary for salvation,

*"Baptism is the symbol of what has already occurred in the heart and life of one who has trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ. It is an important step of obedience that every Christian should take as an act of testimony to others and a public declaration of the reality of our personal identification with Christ."*

**How can baptism be a symbol for something that only comes by baptism?**

**How do you say you're in Christ before you were baptized into Christ?**

**Galatians 3:27** For as many of you as **have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.**

**Acts 2:38** says, **“Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.”**

*It doesn't say, “Be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for a symbol of the remission of sins.”*

**Here is another quote,** *“Saying that we need to be baptized in order to be saved is dangerous because it is saying there is something we must do to complete our salvation.”*

The point this individual is trying to make is that salvation comes by grace through faith alone and there is nothing that anyone can do to add to it. Saved by grace and not of works.

**Ephesians 2:8-9** *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.*

We agree that salvation comes by grace; (grace, being the unmerited favor of God that allows us to respond to the gospel), through faith; (faith, which cometh by hearing and hearing by the word of God).

And there is nothing that we can do to **“add”** to our salvation, but you must do something to receive it, you must obey **Acts 16:29-33.**

Just like when John the Baptist preached the baptism of repentance, those that believed, obeyed and it was accounted to them for righteousness because they justified the word of God by being baptized.

**Acts 16:29-33, 29** *Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 and brought them out, and said, Sirs, **what must I do to be saved?** 31 And they said, believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house.*

**33** *And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; **and was baptized**, he and all his, straightway.*

So, it is for us in the New Testament, the problem is that people today are hearing a counterfeit gospel, a different message that Jesus and the Apostles did not preach in the first century.

You can't believe what you haven't heard, and you won't do what you do not know to do. Why would we not do what the Apostles commanded the first century church to be saved.

If you're not willing to do what they did then you won't have what they had. John said that they truly had fellowship with the Father, and with His Son Jesus Christ.

**James 2:21-24, 21** *Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? 22 Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? 23 And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. 24 Ye see then how that **by works a man is justified, and not by faith only.***

**1 John 1:3** *That which we have seen and heard declare we unto you, that ye also may have fellowship with us: and truly our fellowship is with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ.*

And like those that were gathered at Jerusalem, in **Acts 2**, they witnessed the pouring out of the Holy Spirit upon the believers gathered in Jerusalem. They heard them speaking in tongues in their own languages.

They heard the words of Peter **Acts 2:14-40**, they heard the testimony of Jesus Christ expounded from the scriptures, they heard about the death, burial, and resurrection of the Jesus Christ, they also heard the charges against their own selves concerning the Lords' death, and they believed every word.

The Bible says when they heard, they were pricked in their heart, and asked, **"What shall we do?"**

Now if salvation comes by simply believing, as some say, then the moment those men believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ and received the gospel message into their hearts, they should have been saved, just by simply believing, right?

Now again, if salvation comes by simply believing, this is where Peter should've said, ***"You can't do anything to get saved. Sometime soon you should be baptized so that other people will know about the change that has already taken place in your hearts."***

But that is not what is recorded in the Scriptures.

**Acts 2:37-42** says they that believed were instructed by the Apostles to do something; and if you truly believe, and you truly see your own need for salvation, you will do whatever it is that the word of God requires of you to be saved.

**Acts 2:38** is a description of the application of what Jesus said **in John 3:5** Jesus said a man must be born of water and of the Spirit, or he cannot see nor enter into the kingdom of God.

There are so many scriptures pointing to the necessity of water baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins to try and ignore them all.

According to the analogy of faith, it is always proper to assume that no contradictions or dual realities can exist in the word of God. Either water baptism is necessary for salvation or water baptism is not necessary for salvation, someone is wrong.

How can you say in one breath that water baptism is not essential for salvation, then in the next breath say but everyone should be water baptized as an act of obedience because the Lord commanded it?

**Scripture cannot contradict Scripture.**

If **Luke 24:47** says ***"And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem"***. And in **Acts 2:38** it is written, ***"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins"*** and **Romans 10:9-10** says, ***"confess with your mouth and believe in your heart and thou shalt be saved"***.

It cannot mean that there is more than one way to receive salvation by the remission of sins; one way by simply believing and confessing and another way by believing and being baptised. But they must be taken together, as parts of the whole message.

That repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name; and to those that believe the gospel of Jesus Christ, it is commanded to them to be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of sins.

**Acts 10:48** *And he commanded them to **be baptized in the name of the Lord.***

An Old Testament picture of baptism is found in the story of Naaman the Syrian. **2 Kings 5:1-14**

Naaman was captain of the host of the king of Syria, a great man, and honourable, but he was a leper. Being told by an Israelite servant that there was a prophet in Samaria that could heal him. So, Naaman went to meet Elisha and came with his horses and with his chariot and stood at the door of the house of Elisha.

And Elisha sent a messenger unto him, saying, Go and wash in Jordan seven times, and thy flesh shall come again to thee, and thou shalt be clean.

But Naaman was wroth, and went away, and said, Behold, I thought, He will surely come out to me, and stand, and call on the name of the LORD his God, and strike his hand over the place, and recover the leprosy.

Are not Abana and Pharpar, rivers of Damascus, better than all the waters of Israel? May I not wash in them, and be clean? So, he turned and went away in a rage.

And his servants came near, and spake unto him, and said, My father, if the prophet had bid thee do some great thing, wouldest thou not have done it? How much rather then, when he saith to thee, Wash, and be clean?

Then went he down, and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, according to the saying of the man of God: and his flesh came again like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.

**Did God need the water to make Naaman clean of leprosy?**

## **Would Naaman have received the cleansing of his flesh if he had not obeyed the word to go and wash in the Jordan?**

The answer to both of those questions is, **“no”**.

God gave Naaman a command, telling him how to receive cleansing.

Naaman's cleansing was waiting for his obedience, there was nothing he could do to add to it.

But Naaman had to humble himself and obey the word of God, in order to receive it. Naaman had to go where God commanded him to go, and he had to wash the way God commanded him to wash. And through his obedience, Naaman received his promised cleansing.

Jesus came to offer Himself a sacrifice for our sins, that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name.

Are we not as Naaman the leper? Coming to Jesus (The Prophet) to be cleansed of our sin (the leprosy)? And the Lord sent out to us a messenger (the Apostles) who told us to go and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

We may doubt, we may resist, and we may think it's not necessary or it should be done another way. But it is God that has ordained, that by faith, in the name of Jesus Christ, through the act of water baptism, that He will wash away our sins.

The cleansing is already there, waiting in the name of Jesus. The work is already finished by our Savior, Jesus has already shed His blood for the remission of sins and was raised again for our justification.

And like Naaman's example, those that will humble themselves and obey the Word of God, they shall receive the promised cleansing of sin.

We pray that these studies have been edifying to those who have already obeyed the word of God and may this also serve to provoke others to go back to the Scriptures again and re-examine themselves and the Scriptures that have been discussed in this study concerning water baptism, the salvation of your soul depends on it.

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