

**A REVIEW OF W. A. SWIFT'S BOOKLET  
ON  
WHY BAPTIZE BY POURING?**

**BY**

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I have just read a booklet titled, "Why Baptize By Pouring and Baptize Babies," by W. A. Swift, editor of the Methodist Herald, Monteagle, Tennessee. I have never read a booklet that contains more contradictions of God's word than this one contains. Baptize and Pour are not the same according to Bible usage. Baptize Babies is not to be found from Genesis to Revelation. On the cover of his booklet he has Christ bowing and John The Baptist pouring water on His head. Mr. Swift did not tell us if Christ and John posed for this picture, neither did he tell us who the photographer or artist was. This picture is a cheat and a fraud because it is a relic of Rome. If Mr. Swift did not know the facts relative to this picture he could have known them. In his prefatory remarks he states, That for more than forty-five years he studied his Bible and the writings of learned men and had traveled through Bible lands in search of the truth on the subjects contained in his booklet. Friends, it is almost unbelievable that a man of Mr. Swift's ability could have given a half century of study and travel to learn the facts on any subject and then miss them as far as he did. He says he is thoroughly convinced that

pouring or sprinkling water a person in the name of the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, is the proper mode of baptism. It seems that in his more than forty-five years in search of the truth he would have learned that God, Christ, The Holy Spirit, or any of the inspired writers ever spoke of the "MODE" of baptism. That word came into use centuries this side of the New Testament. Christ, nor the Apostles, ever used the words sprinkle and pour with reference to baptism. They knew the language they spoke and always used the word that would convey the meaning of the act that was to be performed. When they taught that it was necessary for an alien sinner to be baptized for the remission of sins they always used the word that meant "to dip," "to bury," "to immerse," "to cover up," I wonder if they just happen to so speak? Baptism as taught by the Holy Spirit, through the apostles required: 1. Water, (Acts 10:47). 2. Going to the water, (Acts 8:36). 3. Going down into the water, (Acts 8:39). 4. A burial, (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). 5. Coming up out of the water, (Matt. 3:16; Acts 8:39). Sprinkle and pour require only one of these essentials and that is water. Then it is used in a different sense to its Scriptural use. He states that, Sprinkle and pour are from the same Greek word. It seems that after almost fifty years of study Mr. Swift would have learned that the Greek word for pour is "cheo," and for sprinkle it is "rantizo."

#### REASONS FOR WRITING THESE ARTICLES

Mr. Swift states that, Some preachers of other churches give their opinions on water baptism almost every time they preach. I would like to ask Mr. Swift why it is necessary for anyone to give one's opinion on water baptism since God has made

its action and design so plain? A failure to understand the teaching of God on this or any subject is inexcusable. He says, When I was a boy I was baptized by pouring and I was perfectly satisfied. He did not consider that God is the one that must be satisfied and not Swift, or any other man. Too many entertain the idea if they are satisfied with what they have done as obedience to God that God will have to be satisfied. Again he states, Afterwards I was made to believe that if I was not immersed I would be lost, that I endured unnecessary torture for a long time then after some study I become satisfied. In II Thess. 2: 8-12, we have this statement, "And then shall the wicked be revealed, whom the Lord will consume with the Spirit of His mouth, and shall destroy with the brightness of his coming: Even him whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie: That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." When one becomes determined to have his way in matters divine God will send one strong delusions that one might be damned. Elder Swift boasts of the fact that the word "immerse," or "immersion," is not found in the king James translation of the Bible. From his extensive study it seems that he should have learned why the words immerse and immersion are not in the King James Translation. Eusebius, tells us that in A. D. 251, one Novation was sick almost unto death. He had not been baptized so they sprinkled him from head to foot with the understanding that if he should recover

he was to be immersed. He recovered and was satisfied with his sprinkling. He wanted to become a bishop and when he applied for credentials he was denied them on the ground that he had prostituted the office of baptism. Others contended that he did the best he could under the circumstances and therefore should be granted them.

But he never received them. This controversy continued till 1311, A.D. when a council met in Ravenna and declared sprinkling, pouring, and immersion to be equal. The West Minister Assembly convened July 1, 1543, and when the subject of sprinkling came up they took a vote on it. There were forty-eight Bishops convened, so when they cast their votes, twenty-four voted for sprinkling and twenty-four voted against it. A Mr. Lightfoot was chairman of this assembly and it was for him to decide the matter and he cast his vote for sprinkling. (Edinburg Encyclopedia vol. 3, page 236). So those who sprinkle and pour for baptism get their authority from these twenty-five Bishops and NOT from God Almighty. About 1561, these Bishops made a translation known as the Bishops Bible. These Bishops went before Parliament, preached on the subject of baptism affirming that the devil of immersion should be legislated out of the realm, it was so troublesome. In making their translation when they came to the word "Baptizo," they did not translate it but transferred it from the Greek language into the English language. That is, they dropped the letter o, at the termination of the Greek word Baptizo and added the English letter e, making the word Baptize, thus the only difference in the spelling of the Greek and English word is the letters s o, and e. The word baptizo was never translated but transferred from the Greek into the English by giving it an English

termination. In Jer. 23:30, God says, "I am against the prophets every one that steals my word from his neighbor." Jesus says, "He that entereth not into the sheep fold by the door climbeth up another way, the same is a thief and a robber." (John 10:1-3). To sprinkle and pour for baptism is to follow the characters that God and Christ says are thieves and robbers. In 1607, King James called together about forty-seven of his most scholarly men to make a translation of the Bible. He gave several rules by which they were to be governed. One was, that the Bishops Bible must be their guide. So when they came to the Greek word *Baptizo*, instead of translating it they followed the course of these perverters of God's word.

#### WHY PEOPLE BECOME CONFUSED ABOUT WATER BAPTISM

Editor Swift states, I can see why people become confused over this question, "They went down into the water," "Jesus baptized in the river Jordan," "Buried with Christ," "Much water," and other such expressions look like immersion. Mr. Swift virtually admits that these expressions do not look like sprinkle and pour. If it were not for such teachers as he no one would ever entertain the idea that they mean sprinkle and pour. Mr. Swift says that, Baptism by sprinkling and pouring had been administered fifteen hundred year before John the Baptist was born. Such statements has no sanction from God, the law, the prophets, John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, The Holy Spirit, the apostles, or any inspired writer. Such teaching will damn one's soul. Water unmixed with other substances was never sprinkled or poured on anybody or anything for any purpose by divine authority.

Jesus states, "But in vain ye do worship me teach-

ing for doctrines the commandments of men." (Matt. 15:9). If the word of God is not rightly divided then such teachings become the commandments and doctrines of men. "Touch not; taste not; handle not; which all are to perish with the using; after the commandments and doctrines of men." (Col. 2:21, 22). Friends, this language is too plain and simple to be misunderstood. "But though we, or an angel from heaven preach any other gospel unto you than that we have preached unto you, let him be accursed." (Gal. 1:9). Thus we see that the apostles were forbidden to preach more or less than the Gospel of Christ. If an angel should come from Heaven today and pervert in any way God's Holy word that angel would be accursed. The sprinklings and pourings from Moses to John the Baptist were for the cleansing or purifying of the flesh. (Heb. 9:13). Baptism is NOT for that purpose. (I Pet. 3:21). Mr Swift's dodge on the preposition "into," is rather amusing. He said, I did not know that into the mountain and into the sycamore tree had the same meaning that into the water had. He should know that "into" always means "into." It does NOT have a different meaning. He argues that Christ did not go under the dirt when He went into the mountain neither did Zachaeus go under the bark when he climbed into the sycamore tree. He seems not to know the difference between the two prepositions "into," and "under." He argues that Christ went into the side or the top of the mountain—that Zachaeus was on the side of the tree. According to the gentleman when Philip and the Eunuch went down into the water, they only went into the side or on the top of the water. The preposition "into," primarily means 'a passing from the out side to the interior.' He states that, He did not know that "Much water," (John 3:23), means "many springs,"

in the Greek. That does not help his cause. He teaches that a thimble full is as good as an ocean. Many Springs carries the idea of "much" water as the Bible states. Any unprejudice minds knows that it required much water for John to do his baptizing. No argument can overthrow this fact. He states that the falling on or pouring out of the Spirit was the baptism of the Spirit. Wrong again, It was the overwhelming of the Spirit was the baptism of the Spirit. Mr. Swift asks, if immersion is the only mode of baptism then peoples on the Sahara and in the frozen regions could not obey. When he tells us who lives on the Sahara Desert, how they get water necessary for living purposes then I will tell him how those people could obey their Lord in baptism. I wonder if you think that people, polar bears and other animals live without water? Where they get water for their living purposes they could get enough in which to obey God in baptism. God never commands a thing that all men of earth cannot obey.

Mr. Swift states that, Jesus, nor the Apostles, ever preached on baptism. Baptism is mentioned more than one hundred and twenty-three times in the New Testament. That is proof that somebody preached on it. Christ commanded it to be done. (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38), and many other passages could be cited but these will suffice. And too, the Devil had not begun his false teachings respecting baptism at that time. Sprinkling and pouring for baptism was not taught for many years this side of the New Testament. He states that Paul did not regard baptism as essential because he stated that God sent him not to baptize but to preach the Gospel. (I Cor. 1:17). He makes charges against God and Paul that are rather serious.

God, did you send Paul to baptize? No. Paul, did you baptize? Yes. God, did you punish Paul

for his disobedience? No. He charges Paul with sinning and God winking at sin. He should have learned that to supply the ellipsis would give us the complete thought. "For he sent me not to baptize (only) but to preach the gospel (also). Let's notice a parallel passage. "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me but on him that sent me." (John 12:44). To apply the ellipsis we get the complete thought. "Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me (Only) but on him that sent me (also). Friends, baptism is a part of the Gospel, God's scheme of redemption. Mr. Swift says, There are two sacraments baptism and the Lord's supper. The Roman Catholics teaches there are seven sacraments. Why Mr. Swift borrowed just two of them I do not know. No where in the word of God do we read of sacraments. Again he states that, Water baptism is a type of Holy Spirit baptism. He was very careful not to give the Scripture that so teaches. He climaxed all of his assertions when he stated that, John baptized Christ into his priestly office. Then cites Heb. 3:1, as proof.

"Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus." He has made Heb. 3:1, contradict Heb. 8:4, which teaches that Christ could NOT be a priest on earth. Christ was not made High Priest until He entered Heaven. Which one shall we believe, Editor Swift, or Jesus Christ? He stated that, when Jesus was baptized the Spirit lighted on His head. The word of God makes no such statement. I Cor. 10:1-4, the baptism unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea, Swift says, I know this baptism was by sprinkling because Psa. 77:17, says, The clouds poured out water and Exodus 14:29, says, They crossed on dry land. He did not tell how the clouds pour out water and never wet the ground. Exodus 13:20, 21, states that, God went before them in a



pillar of cloud by day and fire by night. Deut. 16:1, says, God brought them out of Egypt by night. Since they were guided by a pillar of fire I imagine it was a hot baptism. Maybe the water was so hot it evaporated before it could fall on the ground. This was a cloud and Psa. 77:17, says clouds. The clouds of Psa. 77:17, poured out water on the Israelites at Mt. Sinai and not at the crossing of the Red Sea. How were they baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea? The dry land was beneath them, a wall of water was on each side of them, and the pillar of cloud and fire was above them. They were completely buried. Friends, this baptism was a typical one and not literal as Mr. Swift would have us believe. In no sense could it typify sprinkle and pour. Mr. Swift says that, The only excuse for Naaman dipping himself seven times in the Jordan was, that he might have been ignorant of the law. II Kings 5, states, "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." Here we learn that Naaman did according to the SAYING of the man of God. Mr. Swift implies that God Elisha, and Naaman, all were ignorant of the law. Lame indeed is the doctrine that depends on such teachings for its support. He claims that, The Scriptural translation of the word baptize in a literal sense means to cleanse ceremonially with water. The Holy Spirit says, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." (Rom. 6:3). "For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27). Shall we believe Mr. Swift, or the Holy Spirit? God has ascribed the cleansing of sin to the blood of Christ. "But if we walk in the light as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another,

and the blood after he died, (John 19:33, 34). One must get into the death of Christ in order to reach his blood. "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death." (Rom. 6:3). He says, John was priest in regular order. John was not a priest but a prophet. (Luke 1:77; Matt. 11:9). He also states that, Christ was to sprinkle many nations. (Isa. 52:15). The scholarship of the world says that should read "Startle" rather than sprinkle, and the context bears out that idea. Jesus NEVER taught sprinkling for baptism. Mr. Swift says, There were from one to six millions to be baptized of John and he was in the wilderness from six to eighteen months. The Bible makes no such statements. He says, John used the water of purification in his baptism. In Numbers 19, we learn that water of purification required the ashes of a red heifer, cedar wood, hyssop, and scarlet. I wonder if the River Jordan was filled with such? He makes a great ado about the two little words "out of" in Matt. 3:16, being from the Greek word "APO," and translated "from," and "away from." It seems strange that a man would spend nearly fifty years searching after the truth and never learn that the two little words "out of," Mark 1:10, is from the Greek word "ek" and translated "out" and "out of." The editor says, The baptism of the Eunuch is one baptism the immersionist put great stress on. The Eunuch was in a desert, not much water in a desert. The Eunuch was surprised to see water. The Eunuch was reading from Isa. 52 Friends, This country was not desert because of scarcity of water because there were enough for Philip to immerse the Eunuch. Turn to Acts 8: 36, and see if the eunuch was surprised when they came to water. He was reading the 53, chapter of Isaiah and NOT the 52, chapter as Mr. Swift states. He

says, If the English of Acts 8:38, is correct and "into" here means immersion then both Philip and the Eunuch were immersed. They both went under the water head and ears, and Philip performed the ceremony under the water and no one saw it done. Mr. Swift should be ashamed of such absurd statements. It is unbecoming a man who poses as a minister of God's word. It seems that he does not know the parts of speech. Into, is a preposition and immersion, is a noun. As before stated: into, means to pass from the outside to the inside. The baptism took place after Philip and the eunuch went down "INTO", the water. He says that, They both were baptized because they (plural) went down both (plural) into the water both (plural) Philip and the Eunuch. Here, Mr. Swift stopped on a semi colon and failed to quote the rest of the passage which reads: and he baptized him. He and Him are singular. Why not quote the word of God correctly?

#### BURIED WITH CHRIST BY BAPTISM

Editor Swift states, There is not a drop of water in Romans 6:4; and Colossians 2:12. God has but one baptism binding today. (Eph. 4:5). Acts 10:47, the Holy Spirit states, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized." According to the Holy Spirit Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12, is WATER BAPTISM. Mr. Swift to the contrary notwithstanding. Heb. 10:22, "Having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water." Our bodies washed with pure water does not have reference to the putting away of filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God. (I Pet. 3:21). God is the author of baptism for the remission of sins and all the commandments and doctrines of men cannot overthrow this

fact. We must hear, believe, repent, and be baptized if we expect to enjoy the bliss of Heaven. Baptism has always stood between the sinner and the salvation of his soul. No exception. How could one be buried with Christ with a little water sprinkled or poured on one?

### BAPTISM ON THE DAY OF PENTECOST

Mr. Swift states, In one day, the day of pentecost, three (3000) thousand were baptized. This notable meeting started at nine o'clock in the morning and certainly the shouting and rejoicing did not cease till noon. That if 3000 were immersed from noon till seven in the evening then seven were baptized every minute. Friends, the above statements are but the creation of his poor imagination in his determination to defeat the teaching of God's word. By no stretch of the imagination can he get such statements out of the second chapter of Acts. The idea of God allowing such an uproar to hinder the preaching of the Gospel of Christ for three hours. Three thousand souls anxious to hear and believe the Gospel and not only believe, but obey it but because of the screaming and shouting of the multitude, had to wait for three hours, or until this tumult was over. He has inserted his opinion as part of God's teaching. "Add thou not unto his words lest he reprove thee, and thou be found a liar." (Prov. 30:6). It is a dangerous thing to tamper with the word of God. He implies that one man did the baptizing on pentecost. We learn from Acts 2, that the twelve took part in all that transpired on pentecost. The editor's argument (?) on Ezekiel 36:24, 25) is rather amusing. The passage reads, "I will take you from among the heathens, and gather ye out of all countries, and bring you into

your own land, then will I sprinkle clean water upon you." Then he goes to Acts 2:5, which reads, "And there were dwelling at Jerusalem Jews, devout men out of every nation under heaven. Mr. Swift should know that the Jews were in captivity in Babylon at the time Ezekiel made this prophecy. God brought them out about the year 536, B.C. Thus fulfilling the prophecy that was made about fifty years before. When He brought them into the land of Palestine He sprinkled them with the water of purification, or clean, (not pure), water. This prophecy had its fulfilment more than five hundred years before Pentecost. He goes to Webster's Dictionary for his authority for sprinkling and pouring. Webster, gives sprinkle and pour as secondary meanings for baptize and not the original meaning.

#### THE BAPTISM OF THE JAILER

Mr. Swift says, He guessed the jailer brought Paul and Silas into the living quarters of the jail house to a fount and they sprinkled him. Friends, what is the guess of Mr. Swift worth in God's scheme of human redemption? We are seeking for the truth respecting the design, and mode of baptism and NOT his guesses. Acts 16:33, "He took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes, and was baptized, he and all his straight-way, and when he had brought them into his house," The facts are: he was baptized before he brought Paul and Silas into his house He took them out of the jail and washed their stripes and was baptized.

#### HOUSEHOLD BAPTISM INCLUDING PAUL'S BAPTISM

Mr. Swift says, There were about fifty individual conversions in the New Testament, of which,

seven were baptized. The editor in his discussion of pentecost that three thousand were baptized. Now he says, There were about fifty individual conversions. I wonder what kind of conversions the other two thousand nine hundred and fifty were? I wish he had stated. Since there were only fifty individual conversions were the other conversions by proxy? There are thousands of conversions recorded in the New Testament and everyone of them was an individual conversion. Not a single exception. NO where does the word of God teach "GROUP" obedience. Does he think God has a blanket scheme of redemption that comes cheaper than the individual scheme? It seems that he has given such intense study to sprinkling that his brain has become about as much scattered as the drops of water in his baptism. Again he states, When Peter said, "Can any man forbid water that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" The logical meaning is: who can forbid water to be brought to baptize these who have received the Holy Ghost as well as we. Mr. Swift charges the Holy Spirit of being illogical and leaving out facts that He should have made. To make such charges against the Spirit is to make such charges against God and Christ. Such teachings are infidelity of the deepest dye.

#### BORN OF WATER

He states that, The water of John 3:5, has reference to the water in a physical birth—that sometime a child is born a "dry birth" that is almost death to its mother. I am not so much concerned about the mother as I am the child that is born a dry birth. Jesus says, Except a man be born of water. There is no water in a dry birth and yet

Jesus says, Except a man be born of water, he cannot, CANNOT, enter into the kingdom of God." According to his theory on the kingdom aren't you sorry for that poor, little "DRY" born baby? I have known babies to die before birth wonder what their destination will be? But again, He has Jesus telling Nicodemus that one would have to be born physically before he could be born spiritually. Was Nicodemus that ignorant? Nicodemus entertained the same idea of the new birth that Mr. Swift entertains. Jesus told him that one would have to be born a new. The Spirit begets through the word of God and water is the place of delivery, or birth. Jesus says, Except a MAN, (not a baby) be born anew he cannot enter the kingdom of God. When one hears the Gospel of Christ, believes it with all his heart, repents of one's sins, confesses Christ and is baptized into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, (Matt. 28:19; Mark 16:15, 16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal. 3:27; I Pet. 3:21), then one is born of God.

#### EIGHT SOULS SAVED BY WATER

Mr. Swift, quotes I Peter. 3:20, 21, and makes the following deductions: the antediluvians (wicked people), were the ones immersed or drowned. The eight souls were saved by keeping out of the water. The man utterly fails to see the teaching of this Scripture. The teaching of this passage is plain. The waters of the flood drowned the wicked at the same time they saved the righteous, Noah and his family. Baptism is a like figure of that. In baptism the guilt of sin is destroyed and at the same time the soul is purified and saved. The waters of the flood translated Noah and his family from the antediluvian world into the post diluvian world.

From the old world into the new world. Baptism translates one out of the old life into the new life which is in Christ Jesus. (Gal. 3:27). The editor concludes by stating, I am contending that baptism is non essential to one's salvation. John 19:33, 34, teaches that Christ shed His blood in His death and Rom. 6:3, "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?" Thus baptism puts one into the death of Christ where one reaches the blood that cleanses from sin. (Matt. 26:26-28). The Devil knows if he can keep one out of baptism he can keep one out of the death of Christ. If he can keep one out of the death of Christ he can keep one out of the blood of Christ. If he can keep one out of the blood of Christ, he can keep one out of the remission of sins, and if he can keep one out of the remission of sins he can keep one out of Heaven. NEVER, did God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, or any inspired writer ever make such statement that baptism is a non essential thing. Baptism is mentioned in every conversion of the New Testament. Some time faith is not mentioned, (Acts 2:38). Some time repentance is omitted, (Acts 8:36-38). Some time confession is not mentioned, (Acts 16:28-35). But in every conversion baptism is always mentioned. Why? God knew the time would come when it would be denied and ridiculed and hence, stamped His approval of its essentiality. Friends, I hold no ill will toward anyone, but that all may know the truth of God's word respecting the scheme of redemption. My prayer is: that many may be brought to God through the study of this booklet.

E. L. Whitaker