

**In Defence of Biblical Christianity**

**Article 5 Baptism**

**“The Outward Confession Of An Inward Reality Heresy”**

A Paper By  
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This apologetic paper is the fifth of a series of articles called ‘In Defense of Biblical Christianity.’ I will be challenging false doctrines that have infiltrated, subverted, and perverted the truth of Biblical Christianity.

## Preface

The following phrase, “Baptism is an outward confession of an inward reality,” is a blatant misrepresentation of Christian baptism, leading millions astray from the true faith handed down by our forefathers and the testimony of scripture.

The mantra “an outward confession of an inward reality” is practiced by most evangelical churches even when they are unfamiliar with the expression. Simply put, the expression means salvation occurs before baptism through a positive confession, making baptism nothing more than a public confession.

This paper will prove beyond a reasonable doubt that this doctrine is heretical and Gnostic.

Gnosticism was a heretical movement that our early church fathers fought in the second century. The Gnostics believed esoteric knowledge (gnosis) enabled the redemption of the human spirit. This tenet of Gnosticism is what I am referencing when I draw on the word gnostic.

This doctrine is so pervasive and accepted as truth that many of you may think I have just made a heretical statement. I assure you the preponderance of evidence says I have not.

I emphatically state that this teaching is heresy, an assault on the gospel. The evidence will show that millions have been converted to Gnostic Christianity.

**I intend to prove from the scriptures with help from our early church fathers.**

False gospel’s have always plagued the church right from the beginning.

Paul writes in **Gal 1:6-8** - *I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a **different gospel**— **7not that there is another one**, but there are some who trouble you and want to **distort the gospel of Christ**. 8 But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the **one** we preached to you, **let him be accursed**. 9 As we have said before, so now I say again: If anyone is preaching to you a **gospel contrary** to the one you received, **let him be accursed**.*

Satan’s early church tactics were incredibly diabolical; he put false apostles in the church who appeared to be preachers of righteousness. They were leading the masses astray.

It is the same today, only worse as the scripture predicts in **2 Tim 4:3-4** For the time is coming when people **will not endure sound teaching**, but having itching ears they will

accumulate for themselves **teachers to suit their own passions**, and will **turn away from listening to the truth and wander off into myths**.

This mantra fulfills prophecy; it is not sound teaching; it is taught by the deceived, proclaimed by those looking for approval ratings, and is an ancient myth that has been reborn.

Paul writes in **2 Cor 11:13-15**- *13 For such men are false apostles, deceitful workmen, disguising themselves as apostles of Christ. 14 And no wonder, for even Satan disguises himself as an angel of light. 15 So it is no surprise if his servants also disguise themselves as servants of righteousness. Their end will correspond to their deeds.*

**Gal 1:6-8 2 Tim 4:3-4** and **2 Cor 11:13-15** reveal that false gospels are in the church by the work of Satan. Satanic deception predominates the landscape.

**The fundamental problem is that heresy is now mainstream orthodoxy.**

The deceived are deceiving. As Derek Prince says, “There is no one as deceptive as the person who is deceived.”<sup>1</sup>

Our church fathers fought the proponents of such heresies like Gnosticisms, Docetism, Montanism, Adoptionism, Sabellianism, Arianism, Marcionism, Apollinarism, Monophysitism, Antinomianism, Augustinianism and the Judaizers.

I will not provide you with a definition for each of these heresies as they are easily found online. Just know that much of the New Testament and the work of the church fathers was written to defend the truth from heresies.

Our fathers were driven to defend the true gospel of Jesus Christ using apologetics (defensive argument) and polemics (offensive arguments). I will use their writings in a supportive role to defend the truth of the scriptures using apologetics and polemics. They did not pontificate highly evolved systems of theology. They taught and expounded on general concepts held as truths, focusing on Christian living.

*The early church fathers' writings have been preserved for us. They are online and accessible at <https://www.earlychristianwritings.com/churchfathers.html>. I will draw upon the Dictionary of Early Christian Belief for my citations.*

You will see many citations like *Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.346*.

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<sup>1</sup> Derek Prince, *Spiritual Warfare For The End Times*, Chosen Books 2017, 129.

The citation begins with the author's name, in this case, Irenaeus, then c.180 represents the approximate date of writing. The E means he wrote to the Eastern church; the W means he wrote to the Western church. This citation shows E/W because he wrote to the East and West. The 1 before the period is the volume number, and the 346 is the page number. This is how each quote is detailed.

The writings of the early church included the work of Clement of Rome, Ignatius of Antioch, Polycarp, Diognetus, Dionysius Justin Martyr, Irenaeus, Polycrates, Pantaeus, Clement of Alexandria, Tertullian, Hippolytus, Origen and many others. If you want to know what the early church taught on over 700 subjects, this is where you go. I used the dictionary reference, which saved thousands of hours of research.

My defence of biblical baptism will be from the bible, drawing on 13 primary and supportive scriptures. I will also draw on the teachings of 12 early church fathers using some 30+ citations from their work.

I state firmly that Church Father quotes are not automatically accurate; they must align with scripture testimony. My references to them are used in support of biblical truth.

## Apologetic Introduction

The early Church apologist vigorously defended against Gnostic baptismal heresies. I will be doing the same. Here, observe what Irenaeus said about those who deny baptism is necessary for salvation.

### **Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.346<sup>2</sup> -Gnostics Approach to Baptism**

*We have come to refute them (**Gnostics**), and we will show in its proper place that this class of men have been **instigated by Satan** to a **denial** of that **baptism which is regeneration** to God. Thus, they **have renounced the whole faith** ...For the baptism instituted by the visible Jesus was **for the remission of sins**.*

Irenaeus believed that regeneration and remission of sins occurred at baptism. He states that those who do not think that baptism leads to regeneration and the remission of sins have denied the faith being instigated by Satan.

Today, Irenaeus would be called a heretic in much of the evangelical church for not strictly adhering to the faith-alone doctrine. Yet, in his day, he was a hero of the faith defending the truth of the gospel.

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid.,

So, I ask, who is teaching baptismal heresy, Irenaeus or the modern-day evangelical church?

If Irenaeus is correct, then numerous denominations are preaching a Satanic message. They have denied the faith and are leading countless millions into condemnation.

If the modern-day evangelical church is correct, then every church father that I quote in this paper is teaching heresy regarding baptism, and their writings should be abandoned.

### **This question must be answered. Who is right?**

I have carefully reviewed the teachings of the early church fathers regarding baptism and have provided below a summary drawn from the 30 quotes used in this paper.

1. There is no salvation without baptism
2. The church is required to make disciples, and disciples must be baptized.
3. The baptized disciple is to be taught obedience to Christ.
4. To reject the necessity of baptism is to renounce the faith.
5. Remission of sins occurs at baptism.
6. In baptism, we are crucified and buried with Christ.
7. In baptism, we die to sin and live for God.
8. The born-again experience includes repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit.
9. Spiritual circumcision occurs at baptism.
10. The bath regeneration occurs at baptism.
11. Baptism is a sacrament that washes and sets us free of past sins, yet if we return to past sins, we fall out of grace.
12. Baptismal water sanctifies the believer so they can receive the Holy Spirit.
13. The Holy Spirit's power is received by believers after baptism, allowing them to live above sin.
14. The devil is driven out in baptism yet will return if the believer falls away.
15. The water of baptism washes the believer in Christ's blood, connecting the believer to the cross and Christ's death and resurrection.
16. True repentance must precede baptism.
17. We become a son of God at our baptism.
18. An obedient faith/love walk was required after baptism to enter eternal life.

As the argument advances, these teachings will be provided as supplemental verification of the scriptures.

I state emphatically that only the **Gnostic heretics** taught that a positive confession of Christ would result in salvation and that baptism was not essential to salvation.

This Gnostic baptismal heresy was of great concern to the early church apologist, as evidenced by their rejection of the doctrine below:

### Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.346<sup>3</sup>

*But there are some of them (the Gnostics) who assert that it is **unnecessary** to bring persons **to the water**.... These claim that the **knowledge** of the unspeakable Greatness is itself **perfect redemption**.*

(Please note that baptism is necessary and knowledge alone is insufficient.)

I hear this heresy all the time in the church and on TV. The Gnostic call goes something like this - ask Jesus to be your Lord and Savior, and your sins are forgiven; you are born again and have eternal life. Another call is to ask Jesus into your heart. These modern-day calls to faith would be heresy to Irenaeus and other early church apologists.

I am unaware of any church father in the first three centuries who believed that a positive confession of Christ was considered the born-again experience. They all taught that we must repent (which means an acknowledgment of guilt and a willingness to turn away from a sinful life) and that we must be baptized for the remission of sins, allowing us to receive the promised Holy Spirit.

Here, observe Peter's word in Acts 2:38: "And Peter said to them, "**Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.**"

Peter and Irenaeus were not advocating that baptism was an outward confession of an inward reality. Peter dogmatically says that repentance and baptism precede the forgiveness of sins and are followed by the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The church fathers fully support Peter and Irenaeus, as you will see. Here, observe what Tertullian had to say.

### Tertullian (c. 198, W), 3. 669<sup>4</sup> - Sacrament of Water

*Happy is our **sacrament of water**, in that, by **washing away the sins** of our early blindness, we are **set free** and admitted into eternal life.... We, like little fishes, after the example of our ichthus, Jesus Christ, **are born in water**.*

*Ichthus was the early church fish symbol for Christianity.*

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid., 52.



Ι	Ιησους	=	Jesus
χ	Χριστός	=	Christ
θ	θεός	=	God
υ	υιός	=	Son
ς	σωτήρ	=	Savior

Tertullian believed that the sacrament of water washed away our sins, just like Peter and Irenaeus, yet the modern church mantra says baptism is not necessary for salvation; it is only an outward confession of an inward reality.

The modern church is teaching a false conversion experience that is Gnostic, not biblical.

**I intend to prove this from the scriptures.**

## Argument

Now that the basis of the argument has been established, it advances in the scriptures with supplemental support from the early church fathers.

Please pay special attention to bolded words because they highlight critical theology. After each scripture, a summary is provided to clarify the theology being taught. First up is the Great Commission.

### 1) Matt 28:18-20 Baptize & Teach Obedience

18 And *Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.* 19 *Go therefore and **make disciples** of all nations, **baptizing them** in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 **teaching them to observe** all that I have **commanded you**. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."*

**Here observe:**

1. Jesus commands his disciples to make disciples.
2. Jesus commands his disciples to baptize disciples.
3. Jesus commands his disciples to be taught to observe all of His teachings.

The text clearly states that baptism is not optional; Jesus himself commands his disciples to baptize. The leaders have a mandate to make disciples, baptize and teach obedience.

All three are mandatory yet primarily absent from Christianity.

## 2) Matt 4:17 Repent For the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand

*17 From that time, Jesus began to preach, saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

### Here observe:

1. Jesus' preaching included repentance.
2. Jesus' primary focus was the kingdom of heaven.

Repentance is a foundational principle of Christianity. Our founder taught that repentance and the kingdom of heaven are connected.

These teachings are not up for debate; repentance and baptism are mandatory. To enter the kingdom of heaven, they must repent first and then be baptized. Baptism without biblical repentance brings condemnation. Here is what Origen believed.

### Origen (c. 228, E), 9:367 Repentance Required.

Matthew alone adds the words "to repentance," teaching us that the benefit of baptism is connected with the **intention** of the baptized person. **To him who repents, it is saving.** However, to him who **comes to it without repentance, it will produce greater condemnation.**

Origen clarifies that a person's heart must be right when the water is entered, or it will produce greater condemnation. Origen says baptism is mandatory to be saved.

So far, the evidence says baptism and repentance are primary kingdom principles by the mouth of Jesus, Peter, Irenaeus and Origen.

## 3) Mark 16:15-16 Believe Plus Baptism

*"Go into all the world and **proclaim the gospel** to the whole creation. 16 Whoever **believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.***

### Here observe:

1. The church is commanded to preach the gospel to the world.
2. That belief precedes baptism, and together, they result in salvation.
3. Unbelievers will be condemned.



This text is not ambiguous; salvation requires baptism preceded by hearing and believing the gospel, which includes repentance. If this verse was a late edition to scripture, as some proclaim, it does not contradict scripture or the early church's teaching.

Here is the theology: a person must believe the gospel, repent and then be baptized. The early church taught that baptism was necessary for salvation.

More evidence:

### **Tertullian (c. 198, W), 3.675. <sup>5</sup> No Baptism, no Salvation**

*Now, the teaching is **laid down** that “**without baptism, salvation is attainable by no one.**” This is based primarily on the grounds of that declaration of the lord, who says, “Unless one is born of water, he has not life.” However, when this is laid down, there immediately arise scrupulous (or rather, audacious) doubts on the part of some.*

Tertullian does not hold to the modern-day view that baptism is an outward confession to an inward reality. Notice the words “laid down” followed by “without baptism, salvation is attainable by no one.”

### **Seventh Council of Carthage<sup>6</sup> (c. 256, W), 5.566 – Not Saved Without Baptism**

*...Therefore, unless they receive **saving baptism** in the catholic church, which is one, they **cannot be saved**. Rather, they will be condemned with the carnal in the **Judgment** of the Lord Christ.*

The above statement regarding baptism by a church council means baptism was universally accepted as church doctrine. Catholic means the universal church. Notice it does not say Roman Catholic.

This statement is compelling evidence that the early church did not believe the modern heresy that baptism is an outward confession of an inward reality. They believed baptism was mandatory for salvation. The text makes it clear that more than belief alone is needed. Only the Gnostics taught that belief alone was adequate.

These statements “cannot be saved,” “salvation is attainable by no one,” “without baptism,” and “saving baptism” are emphatic theological statements.

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<sup>5</sup> Ibid., 53.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid., 55.

The council of leaders believed and taught that baptism is essential in conversion.

It will soon be apparent that the scriptures and all the early church fathers are in absolute opposition to the Gnostic teaching that baptism is not necessary for salvation.

Next up is the born-again experience.

#### 4) John 3:3-8 Born of Water and the Spirit

*3 Jesus answered him, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God." 4 Nicodemus said to him, "How can a man be born when he is old? Can he enter a second time into his mother's womb and be born?" 5 Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is **born of water and the Spirit**, he cannot enter the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is **born of the Spirit is spirit**. 7 Do not marvel that I said to you, 'You must be born again.' 8 The wind blows where it wishes, and you hear its sound, but you do not know where it comes from or where it goes. So it is with everyone who is born of the Spirit."*

##### Here observe:

1. Being born again is mandatory to enter the kingdom of heaven.
2. Salvation is contingent on being born of water and the Spirit
3. Born and water and the Spirit gets you into the kingdom of heaven.

Previously, we discussed the necessity of baptism by the command of our Lord. We also saw that Jesus' call to the kingdom of heaven was through repentance.

We previously discussed Peter's call in **Acts 2:38** to repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit. **Acts 2:38** is the post-resurrection enactment of the born-again experience.

**Acts 2:38** is the gospel that Peter preached that led to the saving of three thousand souls. **Acts 2:41** says *So those who **received his word were baptized**, and there were added about three thousand souls that day.*

It is clear that the converts received the Word, repented, were baptized, received the Spirit and then were added to the church. It is effortless and straightforward.

This is irrefutable evidence that repentance, baptism and receiving the Spirit are mandatory for conversion. The early church believed that these three components of salvation comprised the born-again experience.

I quote five church fathers who all agree that baptism is mandatory and a component of the born-again experience.

Please do not think that I cherry-picked these quotes to prove a point. This theology was consistent across the early church. I will provide additional quotes later in the argument that proves I am not cherry-picking.

### **Justin Martyr (c 160, E) 1. 183<sup>7</sup> - Remission of Sins, Born Again, Repentance**

*At our birth, we were born without our own knowledge or choice, but by our parents coming together... In order that we may not remain the children of necessity and of ignorance, but may become the children of choice and knowledge, and **may obtain in the water the remission of sins formerly committed**, there is pronounced over him who chooses to be **born again**, and has **repented of his sins**, the name of God the Father, the Lord of the universe.... And in the name of Jesus Christ... and in the name of the Holy Spirit.*

Justin Martyr states the following:

1. By choice, you can choose baptism to remit sins.
2. Baptism cleanses all sins committed before baptism.
3. Baptism is part of the process of being born again.
4. Repentance of sins is mandatory to be born again.
5. A declaration of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit is made during baptism.

Justin Martyr did not believe baptism was an outward confession of an inward reality. He believed that in baptism, one receives remission of sins and is born again.

It appears to me that millions have been converted to Gnostic Christianity. Irenaeus says this conversion process is a denial of the Christian faith. I am terrified by this reality.

### **Theophilus (c. 180, E), 2.101<sup>8</sup>- Remission & Bath of Regeneration**

*The things proceeding from the waters were blessed by God, that this also could be a sign of men being destined to **receive repentance and remission of sins**, through the water and **bath of regeneration**- as many as come to the truth and are **born again**.*

Theophilus states the following:

1. The waters are blessed by God.
2. In the water, we receive the remission of sins

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<sup>7</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>8</sup> Ibid., 51.

3. The water is a bath of regeneration
4. The bath of regeneration is being born again.

Theophilus believed the same as Justin Martyr.

### **Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.38<sup>9</sup> - Sanctification in Baptism**

*He who has **been sanctified**, his sins being put away in baptism, and has been spiritually reformed into a **new man**, has become **fitted for receiving the Holy Spirit**.*

Cyprian states the following:

1. A person sanctified is a person whose sins have been put away in baptism.
2. Baptism leads to a spiritually reformed new man.
3. Baptism and sanctification create a new man.
4. A person can then receive the Holy Spirit.

Cyprian believed the same as Justin Martyr and Theophilus.

### **Tertullian (c. 198, W), 676<sup>10</sup> - The Necessity of Baptism**

*“Unless a man has been born again of water and Spirit, he will not enter into the kingdom of the heavens.” **These words have tied faith to the necessity of baptism**. Accordingly, all thereafter who became believers **were baptized**. So it was, too, that **Paul, when he believed, was baptized**.*

Tertullian states the following:

1. Being born again is mandatory to enter the Kingdom of Heaven.
2. Faith is tied directly to the necessity of baptism.
3. Paul was baptized when he believed.

Tertullian’s reference to Paul is from **Act 9:18**. *Immediately, something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and **was baptized***. Paul gives us more detail in **Act 22:16** where he is commanded by Ananias, to rise and **be baptized** to **wash away your sins**, calling on his name.

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 53

Tertullian believed the same as Cyprian, Justin Martyr and Theophilus and so did Ananias who commanded Paul to be baptized.

### **Firmilian (c. 256, E), 5.393<sup>11</sup> Second Birth Occurs at Baptism**

*The second birth, which occurs in baptism begets sons of God.*

Justin Martyr, Theophilus, Cyprian, Tertullian, Firmilian, and many others emphatically believed baptism was necessary for salvation. They also believe that baptism was the second part of the born-again experience being born of water. The third part was receiving the Holy Spirit. This is entirely consistent with all of the scriptures.

Watch for another consistent phrase as the argument advances: the “bath of regeneration.” This was a common expression of the early church fathers. They thought this happened at baptism.

Amazingly, much of the church today teaches that regeneration happens before baptism. This was not taught for three hundred years, as the evidence will confirm.

## **5) John 4:13-14 Never Thirst Again**

*13 Jesus said to her, “Everyone who drinks this water will be thirsty again, 14 but whoever drinks **the water that I will give him** will **never be thirsty again**. The water that I will give him will become in him a **spring of water** welling up to **eternal life**.”*

### **Here observe:**

1. The water Jesus gives means you will never thirst again.
2. This water is a spring of endless water that wells up in a person, resulting in eternal life.

So, what is this living water that Jesus is talking about? How do we apply this living water that wells up to eternal life?

Let me answer this question by first quoting some early church fathers.

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<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 55.

### Justin Martyr (c.160, E), 1.201.<sup>12</sup> Baptism, the Water of Life

*This **washing of repentance** and knowledge of God has been ordained on account of the transgression of God's people, as Isaiah cries. According, we have believed and testify that the **very baptism** which he announced is **alone able to purify** those who have repented. And **this is the water of life**... For what is the use of that baptism which cleanses only the flesh and body? **Baptize the soul** from wrath and from covetousness, from envy, and from hatred.*

There is no doubt that Justin Martyr believed that living water was received in Christian baptism. I agree with him; I see no other way for a believer to be connected to the blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit.

### Tertullian (c. 197, W), 3.170<sup>13</sup>

*We were drawn out from the calamities of this world in which we were tarrying, perishing with thirst. We were revived **by drinking... of the baptismal water.***

Tertullian is making a connection between living water and baptism.

No doubt, living water is received in baptism. This living water is a reference to receiving the Holy Spirit. The church fathers called baptism the bath of regeneration, a.k.a. being born again.

Here are just a few references from our fathers that taught the bath of regeneration or a.k.a. the sacred bath:

- Theophilus (c.180, E), 2.10.
- Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.543. I.574.
- Clement of Alexandria (c. 195, E) 2.215.
- Tertullian (c. 198, W), 3.679.
- Hippolytus (c. 200, W), 5.217
- Origen (c. 288, E) 9.367.
- Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.388.
- Methodius (c. 290, E) 6.320.

These references emphasize that the bath or regeneration (baptism) was taught in the early church.

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid., 52.

Previously, in **John 3:3-8** I demonstrated that the bath of regeneration was essential to being born again.

I am pointing out that the church fathers believed that remission of sins, being born again, or the bath of regeneration occurred at baptism. They unanimously taught you received the Holy Spirit after baptism, as evidenced by Peter's conversion of the 3000 in **Acts 2:38-41**.

Hold tight; I am coming to the exception in section 6.2.

### **Origen (c. 228, E), 9:367 Repentance Required.**

*Matthew alone adds the words "to repentance," teaching us that the benefit of baptism is connected with the **intention** of the baptized person. **To him who repents, it is saving. However, to him who comes to it without repentance, it will produce greater condemnation.***

Origen believed that repentance must precede baptism.

What is clear is that repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit are required for salvation. The three make up the born-again experience.

Further evidence of the mandatory requirement for baptism is evidenced in the following section.

## **6) These Scriptures Mandate Immediate Baptism**

The following six baptism narratives from the book of Acts reveal the doctrine and practice of the apostles regarding the conversion process. Please notice that baptism is essential to conversion; it is immediate, and it washes away sin.

### **6.1 Acts 8:12, 36, 38 First step Baptism after Belief**

*12 But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, **they were baptized**, both men and women.  
36 And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "**See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?**" ... 38 And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and **he baptized him.***

#### **Here observe:**

1. Philip preached the good news of the kingdom and Jesus Christ.
2. Immediately upon belief, they were baptized.
3. The eunuch hears the message and says here is water, and immediately is baptized.

Please notice that there is an urgency to be baptized. This is clearly articulated in the first gentile conversion in Acts 10 that follows.

## 6.2 Acts 10:44-48 Peter Commands Gentile Baptism, Immediately

44 While Peter was still saying these things; the *Holy Spirit fell on all who **heard the word***. 45 And the believers from among the circumcised who had come with Peter were amazed because the ***gift of the Holy Spirit was poured out even on the Gentiles***. 46 For they were hearing them ***speaking in tongues*** and extolling God. Then Peter declared, 47 ***"Can anyone withhold water for baptizing these people, who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"*** 48 ***And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to remain for some days.***

### Here observe:

1. The word was heard, and the Holy Spirit fell on the Gentiles.
2. The Gentiles began to speak in tongues.
3. Peter states that the Gentiles should be allowed to enter the water of baptism.
4. Peter commanded them to be baptized.

What is clear from the text is that baptism was immediate upon belief, and it did not matter if they received the Holy Spirit before or after baptism. Remember, Jesus said you had to be born of water and the Spirit. Receiving the Spirit alone before baptism does not meet Jesus' requirements.

From a theological perspective, the order in **Acts 10:44-48** differs slightly from **Acts 2:38**, but this is expected. Peter would never have baptized a gentile had he not seen evidence of the Holy Spirit.

Please notice that even though they had the Holy Spirit, they were immediately baptized in water. This proves that baptism in water is required for salvation.

The **Act 2:38** model was standard practice for hundreds of years after Peter's death. This does not mean God cannot give the Holy Spirit before baptism should he have a purpose, like the conversion of the first Gentiles.

More evidence of immediate and necessary baptism follows:

## 6.3 Acts 16:15, 33 Immediately Baptized

(Lydia baptism) 15 And after ***she was baptized***, and her household as well, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us. ...

(Jailor baptism) 33 And he took them the same ***hour of the night*** and washed their wounds, and he was ***baptized at once***, he and all his family.



**Here observe:**

1. Lydia hears the message and is immediately baptized.
2. The Philippian jailor hears the message and is baptized in the middle of the night.

What is abundantly clear is that baptism is part of the salvation process, and baptism was immediate upon belief. Baptism immediately follows believing the gospel of the kingdom, and repentance.

**6.4 Acts 18:8 Believed and Baptized**

8 Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the **Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.**

**Here observe:**

1. Crispus and all the Corinthians, upon hearing and believing, were immediately baptized.

Again, baptism is immediate and mandatory.

**6.5 Act 19:3-5 Hearing then Baptized**

And he said, "Into what then were you baptized?" They said, "Into John's baptism." 4 And Paul said, "John baptized with the baptism of repentance, telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, Jesus." 5 On hearing this, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.**

**Here Observe:**

1. John's baptism was a baptism of repentance to believe in the one who is to come.
2. They were all immediately baptized upon hearing of Jesus's baptism.
3. Jesus' baptism was for the remission of sin, preceded by repentance.

**6.6 Acts 9:18, 22:16 Paul Wash Away Your Sins**

**9:18** And immediately something like scales fell from his eyes, and he regained his sight. Then he rose and **was baptized**; 19and taking food, he was strengthened.

**22:16** And now, why do you wait? Rise and **be baptized** and **wash away your sins**, calling **on his name.**'

**Here Observe:**

1. Both verses above are about Paul's baptism, where Ananias is sent to remove Paul's blindness and convert him to Christianity.

2. Verse 9:18 states Paul is baptized.
3. In Verse 22:16 Paul is recounting his conversion and provides us with more detail. He tells us Ananias asks him a question. "And why do you wait?"
4. Paul then tells us he is commanded by Ananias to rise and be baptized to wash away his sins.

The six+ conversion narratives in the book of Acts prove that baptism was immediate and necessary to wash away past sins and mandatory for conversion.

This is why the early church fathers believed it heresy to remove the necessity of baptism.

The Apostle Paul in Rom 6:1-14 articulated the theology of Christian baptism.

## 7) Rom 6:1-14 Baptized into Death, Old Self Crucified, Alive to God

1 What shall we say then? **Are we to continue in sin** that grace may abound? 2 By no means! How can we who **died to sin** still live in it? 3 Do you do not know that all of us who **have been baptized** into Christ Jesus were **baptized into his death**? 4 We **were buried** therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too **might walk in newness of life**.

5 For if we have been **united with him in a death** like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. 6 We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing so that we would **no longer be enslaved to sin**. 7 For one who **has died has been set free from sin**. 8 Now, if we have died with Christ, we believe that we will also live with him. 9 We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. 10 For the death he died, he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God. 11 So you also **must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus**. 12 Let **not sin therefore reign in your mortal body**, to make you obey its passions. 13 Do not present your members to sin as instruments for unrighteousness, but present yourselves to God as those who have been brought from death to life, and your members to **God as instruments for righteousness**. 14 For sin will have no dominion over you since you are not under law but under grace.

I will limit my summary to critical theology only.

### Here observe:

1. In baptism, you are buried with Christ.
2. By dying in baptism, we are united by Christ's death and resurrection.
3. Baptism allows us to walk in the newness of life.
4. In baptism, our old self was crucified with Christ.
5. In baptism, we died to sin, so we should no longer live in it.
6. If we died to sin, then the life to be lived is unto God.
7. After baptism, sin must not reign in your mortal body.

8. After baptism, we must present our body as an instrument of righteousness.
9. After baptism, sin should not control us because we are not under the law but under grace.
10. After baptism, Christ is our master, not sin.

Do not be deceived. Baptism is not an outward confession of an inward reality. It is a reality where a believer is united to Christ's death and resurrection. Even when a believer receives the Spirit before baptism, they still must be baptized because, without baptism, the person is not fully connected to Christ's death and resurrection.

The early church fathers believed this, evidenced by the following quotes:

**Tertullian (c. 203, W), 3.662.<sup>14</sup> - Sealing of Faith, Living without Sin Necessary**

*That baptismal washing is a **sealing of faith**, which faith is begun is commended by the faith of repentance. We are not washed in order that **we may cease sinning**, but because we have ceased, since in heart we have been bathed already. For the first baptism of a hearer is this: a perfect fear.... If it is only after the baptismal waters that **we cease sinning**, it is out of necessity, not of free will.*

Tertullian is referencing the teaching of Paul, where baptism is the sealing of faith. Upon the sealing of faith, one must sin no more. Notice the words out of necessity, which is another way to say if you died to sin, how can you live in it any longer?

Paul taught that the only way to connect with Christ and stay connected to him is to die to your old way of life and then stay dead.

Paul is also advocating the necessity to cease sinning upon conversion. The question is, who is capable of living in victory over sin? Paul addresses this very subject in **Rom 2:28-29** he says *28 For no one is a Jew who is merely one outwardly, nor is circumcision outward and physical. 29 But a Jew is one inwardly, and **circumcision is a matter of the heart, by the Spirit, not by the letter**. His praise is not from man but from God.*

Tertullian says baptism is (preceded by perfect fear) and that the heart is circumcised unto God. This is where the decision to fully die to self and live for Christ occurs. This is why Justin Martyr connects to **Rom 2:28-29** in the following statement.

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<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 54

## Justin Martyr (160, E), 1.216 <sup>15</sup> - Spiritual Circumcision in Baptism

*We who have approached God through Him have received, not carnal, but **spiritual circumcision**, which Enoch and those like him observed. We **have received it through baptism** by God's mercy since we were sinners. And **all men alike may obtain it.***

Do not be deceived; it is clear that the following occurs in baptism:

1. We are crucified and die with Christ.
2. We are connected to his death and resurrection.
3. The Spirit of God circumcises the heart.
4. We receive the sealing of faith through baptism.
5. The Holy Spirit is received.
6. The believer agrees to cease from a life of sin.

**One must die to be born again.**

Please acknowledge that none of these salvation experiences can happen without baptism. The argument becomes more profound when we consider the connection to the body of Christ.

## 8) 1 Cor 12:12-13 Baptism in the Spirit

*12 For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. 13 For in one Spirit, we **were all baptized into one body**—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—**and all were made to drink of one Spirit.***

**Here observe:**

1. Christians are members of Christ's body.
2. We are all connected by the Spirit of God.
3. We were all baptized into one body.
4. We all drink of one Spirit.

The early church fathers believed that in baptism and the receiving of the Spirit, we are connected to the body of Christ, his church. The following quotations evidence this.

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 51.

### Hermas (c 150, W), 2.49<sup>16</sup> - Seal is Baptism

*“Before a man bears the name of the Son of God, he is dead. But When he **receives the seal**, he lays aside his deadness and obtains life. **The seal, then, is the water.** They descend into the **water dead** and they **arise alive.**”*

Hermas says it is not our confession that seals us; it is our death in baptism. He says we die in that water, and we arise alive. This is precisely what Paul taught in **Rom 6:1-14**.

How many modern-day converts believe they were crucified and died when they went into the waters of baptism?

The theology is clear: you have to die to be born again. This death only occurs in baptism.

### Cyprian (c. 250, W)<sup>17</sup> 5.400 – Baptism Remits Sins & Holy Spirit Empowers Over Sin

*Since in **baptism**, every person has **his own sins remitted**, the Lord proves and declares in His Gospel that sins can only be put away by those who have the Holy Spirit.*

Cyprian again connects baptism to the remittance of sins and the power to live above sin by those who have the Holy Spirit. This is a consistent testimony from the first converts in **Acts 2:38-41** to his very day.

Living in victory over sin is not optional. Paul says in **Rom 8:12-14** *12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh, you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God.*

Do not be deceived; you will die if you do not live in victory over sin. God has empowered us with the Holy Spirit, and we must walk in his power. Once saved always saved is a more enormous Gnostic heresy than baptism is an outward confession of an inward reality. I will address this in the following paper.

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<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 51.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 55.

## 9) Gal 3:25-27 Baptism Puts on Christ

*25 But now that faith has come, we are no longer under a guardian, 26 for in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. 27 For as many of you as were **baptized** into Christ have **put on Christ**.*

**Here observe:**

1. In Christ, we become a son of God through faith in Jesus Christ.
2. In baptism, we put on Christ by expressing our faith in Him.
3. Faith gets us connected and keeps us connected.

The righteous shall live by his faith (**Heb 10:38, Hab 2:4**)

The text is clear: we become sons when we put on Christ in baptism. Baptism is part of the faith. Here is what Clement of Alexandria had to say about it.

**Clement of Alexandria (c. 195 E), 2.215<sup>18</sup> - Sonship, Washed & Saved**

***Being baptized**, we are illuminated. Illuminated, we **become sons**... This work is variously called grace, illumination, perfection and washing. Washing, by which **we cleanse away our sin**. Grace, by which the **penalties** accruing to transgressions are **remitted**. Illumination, by which that holy light of **salvation is beheld**, that is, by which we see God clearly.*

This teaching is quite profound. Clement says that in baptism, we are cleansed, our penalties are remitted by grace, and we become a son. Please notice that he ties illumination to baptism and sonship.

**Gal 3:25-27** and the church fathers agree that faith, forgiveness of sins, sonship and salvation are tied to baptism. Paul provides us with tremendous insights into the work accomplished by Christ on the cross and appropriated in baptism. (**Col 2:12-15**).

## 10) Col 2:12-15 Buried With Christ

*12 Having been **buried with him in baptism**, in which you were also raised with him **through faith** in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13 And you, who were dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, God made alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses, 14 by cancelling **the record of debt** that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, **nailing it to the cross**.*

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<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 52.

*15 He disarmed the rulers and authorities and put them to open shame by triumphing over them in him.*

**Here observe:**

1. Paul clarifies that being buried with Him is not optional.
2. All true Christians were buried with Christ in baptism through faith.
3. All true Christians are also raised with him through faith.
4. In baptism, Christians are made alive with Christ.
5. In baptism, our record of debt is cancelled.
6. Our record of debt is nailed to the cross through baptism.

Paul clearly articulates the connection between baptism and the cross. In baptism, our sins and record of debt are cancelled by the cross.

Can the record of debt be cancelled without baptism? Not according to Paul, he makes it clear that baptism is necessary.

Baptism is not an outward confession of an inward reality. Baptism is mandatory and required for the record of debt to be cancelled.

**A person must die to be born again.**

I wish to accentuate the necessity of baptism by requoting Irenaeus.

**Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.346<sup>19</sup> -Gnostics Approach to Baptism**

*We have come to refute them (**Gnostics**), and we will show in its proper place that this class of men have been **instigated by Satan** to a **denial** of that **baptism which is regeneration** to God. Thus, they **have renounced the whole faith** ...For the baptism instituted by the visible Jesus was **for the remission of sins**.*

Irenaeus clarifies that only Gnostics taught that baptism was not necessary for salvation! If Irenaeus is correct, most evangelical denominations have denied the faith.

I agree with Paul and Irenaeus; those who do not teach that baptism is necessary for the remission of sins have renounced the whole faith. My heart is deeply saddened because many sincere leaders have been duped into believing the Gnostic gospel. These people are unknowingly leading millions to the gates of hell.

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid., Pg 51.

Being sincere is inadequate. Paul was a sincere Pharisee when he was killing Christians.

If you have been duped by heresy, I pray you will have the courage to denounce the Gnostic gospel and embrace biblical Christianity.

## 11) Titus 3:5-6 Washed Away Our Sins

*She saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the **washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit**, 6whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.*

### Here observe:

1. Our conversion to Christ occurs by the washing of regeneration.
2. The Holy Spirit is poured out on us at the washing.
3. Regeneration is the work of Christ and the Spirit, resulting in the hope of eternal life

Paul's teachings in Rom 6:1-14, Col 2:12-15, and now **Titus 3:5-6** all connect the washing of regeneration to Christian baptism. The early church believed this, as evidenced by the following eight (8) quotes.

### **Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.388<sup>20</sup> - Old Man Dies, in Washing of Regeneration**

*The blessed apostle sets forth and proves that baptism is that by which the **old man dies** and the new man is born, saying. "He saved us by the **washing of regeneration**."*

Did not Paul in **Rom 6:1-14** say the old man has to die? Yes, in baptism, the washing of regeneration occurs, just as Cyprian said.

### **Irenaeus (c. 180, E/W), 1.574<sup>21</sup> - Purified, Spiritually Regenerated**

*Scripture says, "And he dipped himself seven times in the Jordan." It was not for nothing that Naaman of old when suffering from leprosy, was **purified upon his being baptized**. Rather, this was a **symbol of us**. For as we are lepers in sin, we are made clean from our old transgressions by means of the **sacred water** and the **invocation of the Lord**. We are*

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., 52.



*spiritually regenerated as newborn babies, just as the Lord has declared: “Unless a man is **born again** through **water and the Spirit** he **will not enter** into the kingdom of heaven.*

Here, Irenaeus draws on the Old Testament and then connects the sacred water of baptism with the invocation, believing this process of regeneration or being born again by water (baptism).

### **Origen (c 245, E), 9.941<sup>22</sup> - Bath of Regeneration**

*“By the **bath of regeneration**,” they were born as new-born babies.*

In this quote and other writings, Origen believes the born-again process happens in baptism.

### **Novation (c. 235, W), 5.641<sup>23</sup> - New Birth, Baptism and the Holy Spirit**

*It is the **Holy Spirit** who effects with water the **second birth**, as a certain seed of **divine generation**. It is a consecration of a heavenly birth and the pledge of a promised **inheritance**.*

Novation believes the second birth happens at baptism.

### **Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.276<sup>24</sup> - His New Birth Occurred in the Water by the Spirit**

*By the help of the **water of new birth**, the stain of former years had been **washed away**, and a light from above-- serene and pure—had been infused into my reconciled heart. Then by the agency of the **Spirit breathed** from heaven a **second birth** had restored me to a **new man**.*

Cyprian believes that the water of new birth removes sins, and the Spirit of God creates a new man.

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 54.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 54.

### **Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.551<sup>25</sup> - Sins Put Away in Baptism**

*All sins are **put away in baptism**. In the first epistle of Paul to the Corinthians: ... And these things indeed you were. But you are **washed**, but you are **sanctified** in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

Here, Cyprian quotes the above text and says sins are put away in baptism, being washed and sanctified in the name of the Lord.

### **Methodius (c. 290, #), 6.336<sup>26</sup> - Cleansed in the Bath**

*This denotes the faith of those who are **cleansed from corruption in the bath** (i.e., baptism)*

Methodius believes that baptism cleanses corruption as long as faith is present.

### **Tertullian (c. 213, W), 3.646.<sup>27</sup> – Uncleaness Washed Away in Baptism**

*The flesh is the clothing of the soul. The **uncleaness**, indeed, is **washed away by baptism**.*

Tertullian believed the uncleanness of the human soul is cleansed in baptism. It is safe to say he does not believe baptism to be an outward confession of an inward reality.

### **Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.382<sup>28</sup> - Saving, Purifying and Quickening**

***From baptism springs** the whole origin of faith, the **saving access** to the hope of life eternal, and the divine condescension for **purifying and quickening the servants of God**. For if anyone could be truly baptized by heretics, he certainly could also obtain remission of sins.*

Cyprian connects life eternal to baptism and faith.

Let me interpret Cyprian's words; he is also saying that if heretics baptized you, you did not receive remission of sins.

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<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 55.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid., 56.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid., 54

<sup>28</sup> Ibid., 54

I ask, are all these well-respected church fathers wrong and the modern mantra that baptism is only an outward confession of an inward reality, right? I am going with the church fathers and the testimony of scripture.

It can be said with confidence that the conversion process employed by the modern church bears little to no resemblance to Biblical conversion in the New Testament or the practices employed by our church fathers.

Never once in my life in any pulpit, in person, or on TV have I heard that you receive the remission of sin in baptism. Yet our church fathers consistently taught this for the first 300 years of Christianity.

## 12) 1 Pet 3:20 Pledge of a Good Conscience

- *20 because they formerly did not obey when God's patience waited in the days of Noah while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight persons, were brought safely through water. 21 **Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, with angels, authorities, and powers having been subjected to him.***

### Here observe:

1. Peter says the salvation of Noah's family was by water.
2. Peter connects Noah's family salvation to Christian baptism.
3. Peter says baptism now saves you.

Peter blatantly says that baptism saves you as an appeal to a good conscience through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

If baptism saves, it is not an outward confession of an inward reality.

In the New Testament, baptism is always immediate and done by all converts and with good reason. Just read **Rom 6:1-14** and **Col 2:12-15**, and it becomes abundantly clear that baptism is the only way to connect to Christ's atonement to remove your record of wrongs. In baptism, you die to your old way of life and are raised to a new life.

Any leader who tells you that baptism is not mandatory and not part of the conversion process is teaching Gnostic heresy. They are deceived. This is the testimony of scripture and the early church.

I was duped and taught a false gospel; I am praying that the leaders who read this will also realize they have been duped as well and will denounce the gnostic gospel.

### 13) 1 Cor 1:13 Baptized Tied to Crucifixion

*13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?*

Beyond all doubt, Paul is exalting Jesus. What is his connective argument? Is it not to whom the believer was baptized? Why is he connecting crucifixion and baptism with Jesus? Simple, because baptism is our connection to the crucifixion.

Don't be deceived. Our connection to the crucifixion is baptism.

This is why Satan has infiltrated the church with this diabolical heresy. He knows that if a person **does not die in the waters of baptism, they cannot be saved.**

What is even more diabolical is that Satan has millions believing they are in the faith, and they are not. They have not indeed received the remission of sins by dying in baptism.

I hear Pastors ask why you are being baptized today. Never once have I heard anyone say to be born again and to receive the remission of sin. Yet the scriptures and the church fathers taught that dying in baptism was an absolute necessity and requirement of conversion.

The church has been infiltrated, subverted and perverted by Satan.

May God help the organized church worldwide to denounce Satan's gnostic gospel and embrace biblical Christianity.

#### **Canticle of Mare (date uncertain, E), 8.654<sup>29</sup> – Baptism Washes In Christ Blood**

*Black, I was in sins, but I am comely. For I have repented and converted. I have put away that hateful hue **in baptism**. For He, the Savior of all creatures **has washed me in His innocent blood**.*

Here, the Canticle of Mare states that repentance and conversion happen at baptism, where a person is washed in the innocent blood of Christ.

The Canticle confirms this teaching; it says in baptism that he (and we) are washed in Christ's innocent blood, just as Paul said above.

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 56

Do not be deceived; the entire testimony of scripture mandates baptism. The early church believed and taught the testimony of scripture. That is why I believe what they say. Their teaching on baptism is entirely consistent with the New Testament.

**Do not be deceived; no one can be born again unless they die first.**

## 14) After Baptism

The early church taught that after a person was born again, they were to walk by faith. If a person lost their faith, they would be back under the power of the devil.

**Cyprian (c. 250, W), 5.402<sup>30</sup> - Devil Driven Out in Baptism by Faith**

*It is clear that the devil is driven out in baptism by the faith of the believer. And if that faith should fail afterwards, **he returns**.*

They believed in an abiding faith as Jesus taught in **John 15:9** 9As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Abide in my love. 10 If you **keep my commandments**, you will abide in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commandments and abide in his love.

Jesus' direct teachings are clear: we abide in his love if we obey him.

Jesus taught his disciples in **Matt 28:20**, teaching them to observe all that He has commanded them.

There are 1050 commands in the New Testament; I have never heard a sermon about obedience to any one of these commands. Why?

To review a listing of the 1050, go to [www.breakfreeapologetics.com/free](http://www.breakfreeapologetics.com/free) or click [1050](#).

**Tertullian (c.203, W), 3.661**

*... However, some think that God is under a necessity of bestowing what He has promised (to give) even on the **unworthy**. So they turn His liberality into His slavery!... For do not many afterwards, **fall out of (grace)**? Is not this gift taken away from many?*

Salvation is a gift through repentance, baptism and the Holy Spirit. After salvation, we are required to walk in faith, including obedience to our King, Savior and Lord. Just like Tertullian says, the gift is taken away if we are unworthy.

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<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 55.

Do not be deceived; the just shall live by faith. (**Heb 10:38**)

## Conclusion

I trust the overwhelming evidence has convinced you that baptism is not an outward confession of an inward reality.

As I stated in the preface, the early church fathers believed the following about baptism.

1. There is no salvation without baptism
2. The church is required to make disciples, and disciples must be baptized.
3. The baptized disciple is to be taught obedience to Christ.
4. To reject the necessity of baptism is to renounce the faith.
5. Remission of sins occurs at baptism.
6. In baptism, we are crucified and buried with Christ.
7. In baptism, we die to sin and live for God.
8. The born-again experience includes repentance, baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit.
9. Spiritual circumcision occurs at baptism.
10. The bath regeneration occurs at baptism
11. Baptism is a sacrament that washes and sets us free of past sins, yet if we return to past sins, we fall out of grace.
12. Baptismal water sanctifies the believer so they can receive the Holy Spirit.
13. The Holy Spirit's power is received by believers after baptism, allowing them to live above sin.
14. The devil is driven out in baptism yet will return if the believer falls away.
15. The water of baptism washes the believer in Christ's blood, connecting the believer to the cross, Christ's death and resurrection.
16. True repentance must precede baptism.
17. We become a son of God at our baptism.
18. An obedient faith/love walk was required after baptism to enter eternal life.

The evidence reveals that what our early church fathers taught for the first 300 years perfectly aligns with the 13+ scriptures we reviewed in this paper.

Before anyone engages in baptism, they must understand the cost of following Jesus. Jesus did not hide such a requirement; he laid it out in the following scripture.

**Matt 16:25-27** *24 Then Jesus told his disciples, "If anyone would come after me, **let him deny himself and take up his cross and follow me.** 25 For whoever would save his life will lose it, but **whoever loses his life for my sake will find it.** 26 For what will it profit a man if he gains the whole world and **forfeits his soul**? Or what shall a man give in return for his soul? 27 For the Son of Man is going to come with his angels in the glory of his Father, and then he will repay each person according to **what he has done.***

In conclusion, baptism is not an outward confession of an inward reality. It is reality itself when the believer repents of past sins and is willing to be crucified and die in the waters of baptism. When the believer forfeits their life, they become a sanctified vessel, set apart before the Lord and can receive his Holy Spirit. They are truly born again.

**No one who does not die can be born again, and no one who does not stay dead will enter the Kingdom of Heaven.**

This is the gospel of our Lord. If you have been duped, I pray you will have the courage to denounce the Gnostic gospel and embrace Biblical Christianity.

Thank you for taking the time to read this article.

Two postscripts have been added below to clarify objections that have surfaced.

## **15) PostScript 1- The Thief on the Cross (Lk 23:39-43)**

I added this postscript in response to several people reading this paper and then asking about the thief on the cross who was not baptized yet saved.

When Jesus told the thief that today he would be in paradise, it was before his death, burial, resurrection, ascension to the Father, and before the church was born 50 days later on Pentecost.

The thief was not eligible for Christian baptism because Christianity did not exist. The thief was granted paradise because he repented under the Mosaic Covenant that he would have entered through circumcision, not baptism.

I trust this clarifies that the thief was saved under the Old Covenant, not the New.

## **16) PostScript 2 - I was not sent to Baptize (1 Cor 1:10-17)**

I added this postscript because false teachers are using **1 Corinthians 1:17** as a proof text to deny the necessity of baptism. The text says, "*For Christ did not send me to baptize but to preach the gospel.*" Let's see if they are right.

Before I address this from an exegetical perspective, let's have a review.

- 1) Jesus commanded baptism in **Matt 28:18-20**, so if Paul is teaching that baptism is unnecessary, then Paul contradicts Jesus' direct command.
- 2) **Mark 16:15-16** quotes Jesus saying if you believe and are baptized, you will be saved.
- 3) Why were all of the following believers immediately baptized if baptism was not preached as part of the Gospel of salvation?
  - i. Peter preached in Acts 2:38, then 3000 believed and were baptized for the remission of sins.

- ii. Philip preaches the good news, and the gospel of the kingdom, and they were all baptized. **Acts 8:12.**
- iii. The eunuch hears the word and then says here is water. What prevents me from being baptized? **Acts 8:36, 38.**
- iv. Ananias visits Paul, **Acts 9:17-19**; Paul's blindness is removed, and then Paul gets up and is baptized. In **22:16**, it says he was commanded to be baptized to wash away his sins.
- v. Peter preaches the word to the Gentiles, and they are all baptized immediately. **Acts 10:44-48.**
- vi. Lydia, in **Acts 16:15**, hears Paul preach and is immediately baptized.
- vii. The Philippian jailer in **Acts 16:33** hears Paul preach and is baptized in the middle of the night, and his household.
- viii. Crispus, in **Acts 18:8**, the synagogue ruler, was baptized immediately. Paul did baptize him (**1 Cor 1:14**). Others were baptized but not by him.
- ix. Disciples that were baptized into John's baptism **Act 19:3-5**- heard of Jesus' baptism and were immediately baptized.

#### A Few Questions:

- 1) If baptism was not part of preaching the gospel, where did these converts get the idea that they should be baptized, and why were they baptized?
- 2) Do you believe that Paul would go against the direct teaching of Christ by teaching people do not need to be baptized?
- 3) Peter, Paul, and Philip all preached as recorded in the book of Acts, and after they preached, everyone was baptized. Why?
- 4) Why was Paul commanded to be baptized to wash away his sins?

Do not be deceived by heretics who condemn themselves by their blatant disregard for the teachings of scripture. Now, the proof-text is in context.

*10I appeal to you, brothers, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree, and that there **be no divisions among you**, but that you be united in the same mind and the same judgment. 11For it has been reported to me by Chloe's people that there is **quarreling among you**, my brothers. 12What I mean is that each one of you says, "**I follow Paul**," or "**I follow Apollos**," or "**I follow Cephas**," or "**I follow Christ**." **13Is Christ divided?** **Was Paul crucified for you?** Or **were you baptized in the name of Paul?** 14I thank God that **I baptized** none of you except **Crispus and Gaius**, 15so that no one may say that you were baptized in my name. 16(I did baptize also the **household of Stephanas**. Beyond that, I do not know whether I baptized anyone else.) 17For Christ did **not send me to baptize** but to **preach the gospel**, and not with words of eloquent wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.*

#### Here Observe:

- 1) The context of the passage is about divisions in the Church.
- 2) Some were saying they follow Paul, Apollos, Cephas and Christ.



- 3) Paul brings clarity; Christianity is not about following Peter, Paul and Apollos. It is about Christ:
  - i. He says Paul was not crucified for you.
  - ii. The phrase “*Or were you baptized*” is evidence of their baptism.
  - iii. You were not baptized into Paul, obvious inference to being baptized into Christ.
- 4) Paul baptized very few. (Crispus, Gaius and the household Stephanas.)
- 5) Paul states he thanks God that he did not baptize many “so that no one may say that they were baptized in his name.”
- 6) His purpose was to preach the gospel; others could baptize.
- 7) We know he personally taught baptism as part of the gospel because every person he preached to was baptized. (Acts 16:15, 16:33, 18:8, 19:3-5). Yet baptized a few.

It is still common practice today that the person who preaches may not be the person who baptizes.

Do not be deceived by unlearned people preaching men's traditions.

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