

3-1982

The Texas Herald, V. 33, No. 3, March 1982

J. A. Dennis

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Recommended Citation

Dennis, J. A., "The Texas Herald, V. 33, No. 3, March 1982" (1982). *The Texas Herald*. 10.
<http://digitalshowcase.oru.edu/txherald/10>

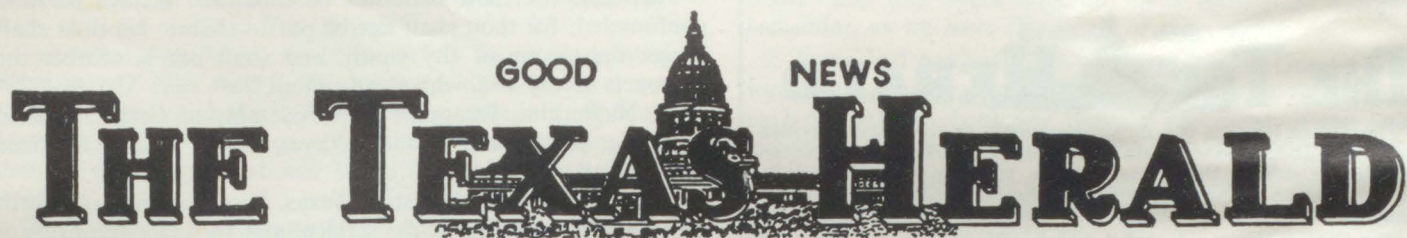
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GOOD NEWS

THE TEXAS HERALD



VOL. 33 NO. 3

AUSTIN, TEXAS

MARCH, 1982

HOW ARE YOU CLOTHED?

“Be Clothed with Humility” (1 Peter 5:5).

No garment is more becoming to the child of God than the gracious garment of humility and none is better styled to please the lover of our souls.

HUMILITY will save you from self-consciousness. It will take away from you the shadow of yourself and the constant sense of your own importance. It will save you from self-assertion and from thrusting your own personality upon the thoughts and the attention of others. It will save you from the desire of display, from being prominent, from occupying the center of the stage, from being the object of observation and attention. It will save you from vanity about your personal appearance, your dress, your style of living, or your abilities or attractions.

HUMILITY will save you from that which is deeper and more subtle—the pride which does not care for vain display but which finds its secret satisfaction in one's own superiority of talents, or birth, or spirituality, or wealth, or success. It will

give you that modesty which “vaunteth not itself”, and give you a love which “doth not behave itself unseemly,” literally, which is not rude”, which does not slight others or show its sense of irritation or superiority by rude manners.

HUMILITY takes all that out of us, and makes us, unassuming, natural, and simple. It will save you from reviewing your own work after it is done, and from feeling self-complacent because you have done it well; or what is equally vain, chagrin because you did it poorly. The very chagrin shows that you expected something from yourself and, in your vanity and pride, were disappointed. It will save you from looking for flattery and praise from others when your work is done. The humble Christian will simply do his best and leave it with the Lord, and not look for any reward in the plaudits of men; his supreme recompense: “The Master praises; what are men?”

—A. B. Simpson

GOOD NEWS

THE TEXAS HERALD

The TEXAS HERALD is published monthly as the Lord provides the funds. It has no subscription price, but is distributed without charge, within the United States, to those who request it. Its publication is made possible by the free will gifts of those who receive it.

The TEXAS HERALD is published by Words of Life, Inc., of Austin, Texas, a non-profit, religious corporation chartered under the laws of the State of Texas, for the purpose of spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Kingdom of Heaven. Contributions, Gifts and Legacies, of money or property, made to Words of Life, Inc., are tax deductible..

Mail Address Post Office Box 2156, Austin, Texas 78768 U.S.A.
 EditorJ. A. Dennis

"The words that I speak unto you, they are Spirit, and they are life." (John 6:63).

Dedication Service

Saturday, December 12th, 1981, at 11:00 A.M. we dedicated the New Office and Headquarters Building of Words of Life, Inc., and its use, to the Lord Jesus, and ourselves to the better serving of Him and His Kingdom. The Office is located at 401 Junction Hwy. in Kerrville, Texas, 100 miles west of Austin, Texas.

Victor Schober, Pastor of the Church of Glad Tidings in Austin, Texas, led the friends of this ministry who had gathered for the occasion, in some opening choruses and songs of Praise.

Mrs. John G. Heard, of Houston, Texas, read an appropriate Scripture from Isaiah 54: 2-4:

"Enlarge the place of thy tent, and let them stretch forth the curtains of thine habitations: spare not, lengthen thy cords, and strengthen thy stakes; For thou shalt break forth on the right hand and on the left; and thy seed shall inherit the Gentiles, and make the desolate cities to be inhabited.

N O T I C E

Contributions, Gifts, and Legacies, of money or property, made to Words of Life, Inc., of Austin, Texas, for any phase of its ministry, are tax deductible.

Words of Life "Seven-Fold" Ministry includes Native Evangelism in Ghana, Missions, The Texas Herald, Booklets, "Insurance Policy" Tracts, and the personal Preaching, Praying, and Writing Ministries of its founders.

A Tax Deductible Receipt is issued for every gift. Checks should be made payable to: Words of Life, Inc.

Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed: neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame: for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more."

W. N. Perkins, Pastor of First Assembly of God Church in Kerrville, prayed the opening Prayer, asking God's continued blessing on this ministry.

John G. Heard, of Houston, Texas, Vice-President of Words of Life, Inc. presided at the service, and spoke of the Love of God's Word that is evidenced in the Ministry's Booklets, Tracts, and the monthly magazine, **The Texas Herald**.

Mrs. J. A. Dennis, Secretary and Director of Words of Life, Inc., expressed our appreciation for all who, through the years, with their prayers and loving and generous gifts, had made this ministry become a blessing to many people. She said, "I am happy to be Secretary, and help Mr. Dennis, because I know we are in God's Will. It is wonderful when you are in His Will, to see how He works things out, when they seem impossible."

Alice Ann Bacon, Owner of the Building which she has graciously leased to Words of Life, Inc. was present and spoke briefly. She had read some of our booklets long before meeting us.

Hoit K. Frierson who, with his wife, has so faithfully helped in this ministry for the past five years, and who is now our trusted Agent in Austin, Texas, told feelingly why he had continued with Words of Life, Inc. "Because it was all for Jesus".

J. A. Dennis gave a brief History of the beginning of this Ministry in "The House of Prayer for All People" in Austin, and publishing of The Texas Herald, Six Booklets, Reprints, and Two Insurance Policy Tracts. He concluded by recounting how God had Miraculously led and confirmed the move of Words of Life, Inc. office to Kerrville, all in less than a month's time.

Brother Victor Schober prayed a Powerful Dedicatory Prayer over the office and its contents, and the Christian literature that would go out from here, and over the Directors, Officers, and Helpers of Words of Life, Inc. of Austin, Texas. (Our official Name) Then he led the group in songs and worship of our Lord Jesus.

John G. Heard closed the service with Prayer.

Two of our five Directors, Ralph L. Littlejohn, and K. W. Ferguson, both of Houston, Texas, were unable to attend the Dedication, but sent their Greetings, as did Mr. & Mrs. F. E. Ward, also of Houston.

Those driving from Austin to attend the Dedication were, Victor Schober, Mr. & Mrs. Hoit D. Frierson, M. & Mrs. Harold Godfrey, and Mr. & Mrs. Hoit K. Frierson, and their small son, Hoit Aaron.

We appreciated the number of old and new friends in Kerrville who came.

The Lord gave us a beautiful day for the occasion, and especially blessed the service, for which we give Him Thanks and Honour, and the Glory.

Mr. & Mrs. J. A. Dennis

Is Baptism Essential?

(A LETTER REPRINTED FROM JULY, 1959
 TEXAS HERALD)

Dear Friend in Christ,

I do really appreciate the two "Holy Spirit" booklets, and am looking forward to some more to give as the Lord leads.

Your message on "Christ's True Church" is wonderful — Also, the one on "Are You Saved?"

Just what does Mark 16: 16 mean? Is baptism essential in being saved? Also Acts 2: 38? Jesus told Nicodemus a man is born of water and spirit, but did not mention baptism. In Matthew 3: 15, when Jesus asked John to baptize him, he said that All righteousness should be fulfilled. (Also Acts 8: 37-38; Acts 22: 16)?

Do you think it necessary to be baptized again after being saved and Baptized with the Holy Ghost? Even though a person received his or her baptism when a baby? As some churches dedicate babies to the Lord? Maybe this would be a subject you could discuss in one of your articles. The thief on the Cross did not have a chance to be baptized. How do you think Paul and Silas baptized the jailor?

Would a person be lost if he were never baptized even though he believes he has been saved? How would you answer all these questions?

What is the answer to baptism, when it takes the shed blood of Jesus to wash and cleanse us from all unrighteousness?

It was a rejoicing time in my soul when I read about the revival in the Philippines in the Herald of His Coming. It certainly would be wonderful for one to break forth here in America.

Thank you for your prayers in my behalf. The Lord is so good to me, for which I do praise him every day.

May the Lord continue to bless you and sustain you in these hours of need.

Your Friend In Christ
N.

P.S. Have you written anything on the seven Church periods? (Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, and Laodicia) Does Sardis represent the Church of the Reformation, beginning about 1500 A.D.?

Dear Miss N.

I am sorry to wait so long before answering your letter, but have been too busy to write sooner, and also have been praying over how to answer your many questions. But last night the Lord gave me the answers and I finished this in the wee hours of the morning. I pray it will be enlightening to you and helpful to many others who may read it.

I will take up your last question first. No, I have never written anything on the Seven Churches, or the Seven Church periods. And I do not know whether Sardis represents the church of the Reformation.

Next, let's take the thief on the cross, and get him out of the way. He has been a stumbling block to so many for so long.

THIEF ON THE CROSS

Many people argue that they don't need to be baptized because "the thief on the cross wasn't baptized," yet Jesus said, "this day shalt thou be with me in Paradise." Here are my thoughts, after prayer, on this question.

1. No one now living knows whether or not the thief had been baptized. I recently read a long argument to the effect that he had been. One Scripture I recall the writer used was Mark 1: 4-5.

"John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

"And there went out unto him ALL the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem and were ALL baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins."

It is possible that the thief had been one of those included

in the ALL that Mark uses. He could have been a baptized backslider, as we have thousands of them today.

2. Jesus had not yet given the disciples the Great Commission, had not yet commanded them to "Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost." (Matt. 28: 19)

The Christian era, the Church, was not really born until the day of Pentecost, though Jesus and his disciples represented the pattern, the seed-bed of the Church.

3. Jesus could, if He wanted to, make an exception in the thief's case. Yes, I hear the shouts, "But God is no respecter of persons!" But, Jesus, Like God, is Sovereign and can do as He likes with his own.

"Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honour, and another unto dishonour?" (Rom. 9: 20-21)

Jesus did make some exceptions to his general rules laid down to his disciples. For instance, when He sent them out, two by two, to preach, He commanded them: "Go not into the way of the Gentiles, and into any city of the Samaritans, enter ye not. But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel." (Matt. 10: 5-6)

Yet Jesus himself went through Samaria, stopped by the well at Sychar to win the adulterous woman, and stayed two days

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in the village, where many more believed on Him. (John 4: 1-43)

Jesus did not send his disciples to preach Salvation to the Gentiles until after Pentecost, nor was the "bread of healing" spread for any but the "House of David" until the Holy Ghost had come down to teach that the doors were open to "who-soever will."

Yet, Jesus, after telling the Syro-Phoenician woman that God's healing "bread" was not for the Samaritan "dogs," healed her daughter, in answer to her great faith. (Matt. 15: 21-28)

The thief on the cross spoke up in defense of Jesus, in his misery and pain, when all men had forsaken him, and most of his own disciples had fled. If Jesus wanted to show him a special favor, who can find fault with Him?

4. The thief was baptized in his own blood as he hung on the cross, just as Jesus was, as He hung bleeding beside him.

After Jesus had been baptized by John the Baptist in the River Jordan, He told his disciples that He had another Baptism coming: the Baptism of Blood and the Cross.

"But I have a baptism to be baptized with; and how am I straitened until it be accomplished;" (Luke 12: 50)

"But Jesus said unto them, Ye know not what ye ask: can ye drink of the cup that I drink of? and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

"And they said unto him, We can. And Jesus said unto them, Ye shall indeed drink of the cup that I drink of; and with the baptism that I am baptized withal shall ye be baptized." (Mark 10: 38-39)

John wrote of these two baptisms that Jesus had suffered for us: by water and by Blood.

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ; not by water alone, but by water and blood. And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth." (I John 5: 6)

Perhaps the thief was denied the privilege of being baptized in water, as Jesus had been; but he was granted the honor of being baptized in his own blood, as was Jesus, and of accompanying his Lord into Paradise.

5. You are not the thief on the cross. You have both read and heard God's commands: "Repent, and be baptized EVERY ONE OF YOU in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2: 38)

"He that believeth and is Baptized shall be saved." (Mark 16: 16)

OUR JOB IS TO OBEY

Many people would rather argue over God's commands than obey them. That is the root sin of man, planted by the devil. That is what the serpent got Eve to do, argue and reason out an excuse for disobeying the clear commands of God. The devil uses the same tactics today to shunt many a soul off the road to Heaven and put him on the side-track that leads to hell.

Jesus said, "If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him. He that loveth me not keepeth not my sayings." (John 14: 23-24) Obedience, then, is the proof of our love; disobedience the proof of our lack of love of God.

Jesus plainly commanded all who love Him, believe in Him, and accept Him as their Saviour, to be baptized.

Jesus himself set the example for all who would "come after him," when He marched down into the waters of Jordan and requested John to baptize Him.

He said, "If any man will come after me, let him deny himself and take up his cross, and follow me." (Matt. 16: 24)

"Follow me" into the water and be baptized as I was." "Follow me in receiving the Holy Ghost, as I did." "Follow me in loving kindness to others." "Follow me in humble obedience to every wish of the Father." "Follow me . . ." "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me." (John 6:38)

Jesus would not utter one word or do one thing, except it was what his Father wanted Him to do.

He didn't argue—He obeyed.

"For I have not spoken of myself; but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment, what I should say and what I should speak. And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak." (John 12: 49-50)

That was the spirit in which Jesus humbled himself and was baptized of John in the Jordan. Of course, He didn't need to be baptized. He had no sins to wash away. No wonder John drew back and objected. But Jesus insisted. He was setting the pattern for all who would follow Him. They were first to Believe. (John 3: 16) Second, Be Baptized. (Mark 16: 16) Third, "Receive ye the Holy Ghost." (John 20: 22)

He told John, "It becometh us to fulfill all righteousness." (Matt. 3: 15)

"ALL righteousness." So many want to leave out part of it, do as little as they think they can "get by" with.

Jesus wanted to do ALL that the Father told Him to do. Why should we want to get off with less?

Jesus could very easily have said, and with all truth, as so many try to say (without the truth): "I don't need to be bap-

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tized. I am the Son of God. I am without sin. I am pure and holy. Baptism won't add anything to me. I'm already saved."

He could have, but He didn't. He was meekly baptized, as his Father had told Him to be.

He expects the same glad obedience of those who would be his disciples.

HE "SUFFERED" IT

The Bible says that Jesus "though he were a Son, yet learned he obedience by the things which he suffered." (Heb. 5: 8)

Not all of that suffering was in the Garden of Gethsemane or on the Cross of Calvary; nor was it all physical suffering, else He would not have learned obedience until the end of his ministry.

No, He learned obedience right from the start, by "suffering" himself to be baptized when He didn't need it. By joining himself to the crowd of publicans and sinners waiting for John to baptize them. By taking his place beside the rankest sinner in the crowd, and identifying himself with that man's sin. By "suffering" or "putting up with" the humiliating spectacle of the Son of God being baptized before the watching multitude, in the same way as a common thief or adulterer. Yes, He "suffered" it, to please and obey his Father.

He "put up with it" for you and me — and now He has to "put up" with a lot of excuses from people who "don't think they need to be baptized."

At the Jordan, Jesus refused to "stand on his rights" or position, but He "humbled himself and became obedient."

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God:

"But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

"Wherefore (because of this very humble and complete obedience) God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name." (Phil. 2: 5-9)

"For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted." (Luke 14: 11)

The reason many people rebel at being baptized or question its necessity, is because they have not humbled themselves — their pride, their stubborn wills rebel — they don't like to admit that they are vile sinners, and need to be washed, as a sow from its mire.

By their very stubbornness in this regard, they demonstrate that the "old man" is not dead, but very much alive and "kicking against the pricks" of God's commands.

I would far rather be baptized a hundred or a thousand times, yes, every day if necessary, or asked, than to refuse to obey his loving commands and displease the One who "suffered" so much that we might inherit Heaven.

Jesus told his disciples, "The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and chief priests and scribes, and be slain and be raised the third day." (Luke 9:22)

Peter says, "For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example. That ye should follow his steps." (I Pet. 2: 21)

And Paul, "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him: if we deny him he will also deny us." (II Tim. 2: 12)

God doesn't want argument. He expects obedience.

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice."

You ask, "Would a person be lost if he were never baptized, even though he believes he has been saved?"

The lack of a little water might not cause him to miss Heav-

en, but an argumentative and rebellious spirit would.

GOD'S WORD COMMANDS BAPTISM

The Bible is so very plain and emphatic about being Baptized, that it is strange to me how sincere souls can be confused in the matter.

You asked about Jesus and Nicodemus, saying He did not mention baptism. But He did, when He said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (John 3: 5) I can read no meaning into his use of the word "water" in this passage, other than baptism, when it is coupled with his direct commands in other Scriptures, and demonstrated by his own baptism, in WATER.

Folks like to think they are so "spiritual" today, that they don't need the "childish ritual" of baptism. But Jesus wasn't too good to let a country preacher baptize Him in a muddy river, rather than disobey and displease God.

Jesus commanded his disciples to "Go preach the gospel to every nation" and to "Baptize" those that believe. Those that believe not, were not to be baptized, for they were damned.

The disciples obeyed, literally, Christ's commands in this respect. "Much water" (John 3: 23) "The disciples baptized." (John 4:1) "Here is water." (Acts 8: 36)

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How did Paul and Silas baptize the Jailor? In water, just like all the other instances of baptism recounted in the New Testament. In the same way that Christian converts are baptized today wherever men teach and OBEY Christ's commands on the subject of Baptism.

Many people want to read one verse in Acts 16, and then stop, thinking they have "got it." When the repentant jailor fell down at the feet of Paul and Silas and trembling asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16: 30) They replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." (Acts 16: 31)

But Paul and Silas didn't tell the jailor, "You've got it!" at that point, and go off and leave him. "And they SPAKE UNTO HIM THE WORD OF THE LORD, and to all that were in his house." (Acts 16: 32) What "Word of the Lord" do you suppose Paul spoke unto them? Whatever it was, it included Christ's commands on Baptism, for the next verse continues: "And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was BAPTIZED, he and ALL his, STRAIGHTWAY." (Acts 16: 33)

And the result?

"And when he had brought them into his house, he set meat before them, and REJOICED, believing in God with all his house." (Acts 16: 34)

Scoffers ask, "Where did they get water enough at midnight, in the dark, to immerse the jailor and his family? Surely they just sprinkled them with a little water."

I have heard personally and read the testimony of a missionary in Japan who rebelled at baptism by immersion, and also at the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, until a prayerful study of God's Word convicted him of the necessity of both. After he surrendered his stubborn will and was baptized and then filled with the Holy Ghost, the Lord gave him a mighty ministry. Many souls were saved, many filled with the Holy Ghost as they came up out of the water, even as Jesus was.

So impressed was he of the importance and blessing of baptism, that he baptized his converts immediately after they confessed their acceptance of Jesus Christ as their Saviour, regardless of the hour, day or night, just like Paul and Silas did.

Where did he get the water?

He led them to the ocean and baptized them there. One night

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a man made his "good confession" at midnight. It was pitch dark and they had no lantern. But they CRAWLED and felt their way to the water's edge, and he baptized the man and he came up filled with the Holy Ghost and speaking in other tongues as the Spirit gave utterance.

Scoffers used to argue, "How could they immerse 3,000 in one day, when that many were saved and baptized the same day at Pentecost?" And they would spend hours figuring how long it would take and how many preachers would be needed, etc., etc.

But today on foreign shores, after a mighty revival campaign by some of today's evangelists, a hundred or more preachers walk into the sea and baptize several thousand new converts in a few hours.

GOD'S WORD IS TRUE

God's Word is true, in spite of all the scoffers and their intelligent reasoning." And God's commands are meant to be obeyed just as they are written, rather than to be argued about.

"Except ye be converted and become as little children (and obey your Father), ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. 18: 3)

Paul said servants should be obedient to their masters, "not answering again" — not "talking back." Too many people want to "talk back" to God instead of obeying Him. They seem to think they know more than Jesus and God and the Bible, too.

BAPTISM IS SACRED

Baptism, as planned and commanded by the Father and demonstrated and commanded by Jesus Christ, is a serious, sacred and essential part of God's plan of Salvation. If it were not, Jesus would not have been baptized, nor would He have commanded his disciples to baptize those who would believe on Him. Nor would the Holy-Ghost-filled Peter have told the Jews who asked what they must do, "Repent and be baptized every one of you." Nor would Paul and Silas have baptized the jailor STRAIGHTWAY, at midnight, if it were unimportant. Nor would Peter have COMMANDED Cornelius and all his household to be baptized, after the Holy Ghost fell on them, if it were something that we could do or refuse to do, as we felt like it.

Yet, Baptism with all its sacredness and importance, is often made light of, overlooked, or wilfully disobeyed.

You ask, "What is the answer to baptism, when it takes the shed blood of Jesus to wash and cleanse us from all unrighteousness?"

The verses you quote from, say this: "If we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship one with another, and the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." . . . "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." (I John 1: 7, 9)

"IF we WALK IN THE LIGHT." That is if we follow and obey the light we have. Jesus has given us the light on being baptized, both by command and example.

Of course, there is no saving quality in water, whether much or little. But there is much saving grace in believing and obeying Jesus and His Word.

The Baptism that saves us from sin, is the Baptism INTO Christ.

"Know ye not that so many of us were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Rom. 6: 3-4)

How are we Baptized into Christ? By Believing in Him, Accepting Him, Inviting Him to come in and change our vile lives into clean and holy vessels, meet for the Master's use.

This acceptance of Jesus must be wholehearted, and will naturally include the acceptance of all his commands and the acceptance of his life on earth as our example, our "rule of faith and practice."

Baptism is our voluntary act of submission to God's will and Christ's commands. It is our open confession to the world that we have accepted Jesus as our Saviour and only hope of Heaven. It is our open testimony to the world that the blood of Jesus DOES cleanse us from our sins, just as water cleanses our outward bodies.

It is our obedient and believing demonstration of the fact that "if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature, old things are passed away; behold all things are become new." (II Cor. 5: 17)

It is our entering into the act, so far as we ourselves are able, of burying the "old man" and "rising to walk in newness of life." It is our public demonstration of the fact that "I am crucified with Christ, nevertheless I live, yet not I but Christ liveth in me, and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." (Gal. 2: 20)

Ananias told Paul, "And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away thy sins." (Acts 22: 16)

Some people think Paul was "saved" and his sins washed away when he met Jesus on the road and was stricken blind. Or when he was praying three days. But Ananias came on the third day and tells him to be baptized and wash away his sins.

Peter commanded the Jews on the day of Pentecost, when they asked what to do: First, Repent. Second, Be Baptized, EVERY ONE OF YOU in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins." (Acts 2: 38) Peter didn't make any exception for those who "didn't think it essential" or necessary, or important. He said, "Be baptized, every one of you." And they obeyed him. "Then they that gladly received his word WERE BAPTIZED." (Acts 2: 41)

What plainer language do we need if we really want to follow the pattern set by Jesus and obeyed by his disciples?

Ananias told Paul not to "tarry" about being baptized. Paul baptized the jailor "STRAIGHTWAY," not even waiting for daylight, not even waiting to eat, though they probably had had no supper.

The Jews who believed in Christ after Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost were baptized the "same day."

Yet, strangely enough, many people, especially Pentecostal folks, "get saved," "filled with the Holy Ghost," and then tarry 10 or 20 or 30 years without being baptized, indeed seem to think it of little importance until some Bible preacher comes along and preaches them under conviction.

You ask whether I believe it necessary to be baptized again after having been saved and baptized with the Holy Ghost, though one had been baptized as a baby.

As a baby they were no doubt sprinkled, which is not Bible baptism. Sprinkling is an indulgence granted by the Catholic Church after several centuries of argument about the matter, during which time the question of infants who were too small to be immersed, and dying persons who were too sick to be immersed, were considered. And after a few exceptions had been granted, the argument was advanced that if sprinkling was sufficient in those cases, why wasn't it sufficient in all cases, so why bother about immersing anybody anymore. So they quit, and began sprinkling a little water or pouring a little water on the one who wished to be baptized.

Many of the Protestant churches merely carried over this custom when they broke away from the Roman Church. As far, then, as Scripture and the way of baptism in the early church, infant baptism is no baptism. Jesus said, "He that BELIEVETH and is baptized shall be saved." An infant cannot believe, so being baptized means nothing to them. Dedicating babies to the Lord is a beautiful service and inspiring to the parents, but has no effect on the Salvation of the child. He must make his own decision to accept or reject Christ, when he gets old enough to understand and to believe on Him.

But should a person who feels themselves saved and filled with the Holy Ghost still be baptized?

Yes, and the Scriptures so teach.

At Cornelius' house, God worked one of his "exceptions" to his general plan of things. As Peter preached to them, the mem-

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bers of Cornelius' household were all filled with the Holy Ghost. They "spake with tongues and magnified God." (Acts 10: 44-45) Since the Holy Ghost comes into the convert's heart "after ye believe" (Acts 19: 2), it seemed plain to Peter that they had been saved while he preached "that through his (Jesus) name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." (Acts 10: 43)

?So, what did Peter do? Did he get up and go home, saying "You've got it! You don't need me any longer."

No, he said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? And he **COMMANDED** them to be baptized in the name of the Lord." (Acts 10: 47-48)

I've seen people swell up with pride and indignation when asked to be baptized when they seek to unite with some church that practices the Bible way of baptism — by immersion. They say, "I've been baptized (sprinkled). I don't need to be baptized again."

Well, Jesus didn't **NEED** to be baptized when He came to John — not as far as sins were concerned — but He **NEEDED** to be baptized to "Fulfill all righteousness" and obey his Father's commands.

King Saul learned a bitter lesson one day when he thought if he did "what he thought was right," God would be satisfied. So he kept the best of the cattle and sheep of the Amelekites and spared their king, Agag, though God had commanded him to destroy them all.

For that presumptuous disobedience, God rejected him as King.

"For it repenteth me that I have set up Saul to be king: for he turned back from following me, and hath not performed my commandments." (I Sam. 15: 11)

"Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For rebellion is as the sin of witchcraft, and **STUBBORNNESS** is as iniquity and idolatry. Because thou hast rejected the word of the Lord, he hath also rejected thee from being king." (I Sam. 15: 22-23) And all this over a few cattle and sheep! No, all this because Saul dared to presume that his wisdom and judgment were better than to humbly obey God, even when it seemed a waste of good beef steak and lamb chops to do what God had told him to do.

IT MEANS "OBEY"

"What does Mark 16: 16 mean?" I believe it means just exactly what it says. "He that believeth and is baptized, shall be saved. He that believeth not shall be damned."

Acts 2: 38? Just what it says: "Repent, and be baptized, **EVERY ONE OF YOU . . .** for the remission of sins."

Matt 3: 15? Just what it says: "Except a man be born of **WATER** and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." Be baptized to fulfill all righteousness.

Acts 8: 36-38? The same. "See here is water: what doth hinder me to be baptized." "If thou believeth with all thine heart, thou mayest."

First, in each case, comes believing, then repenting, then baptizing.

When we believe in Jesus Christ as our Saviour and the Son of God, it makes us know we are sinners and need a Saviour.

According to the Scriptures, the Saving Grace of God, the Cleansing Blood of Jesus, the Salvation of a Soul, the being Born-Again as a child of God, has two parts—our part, and God's part.

God's part, of course, is the greater by far, and far more important. "For by grace are ye saved through faith, and that

not of yourselves, it is the gift of God. Not of works, lest any man should boast." (Eph. 2: 8-9)

But man has a part, also, without which he cannot be saved.

God saves no one against his will. So man's part is, first to Believe; Second, to Obey.

As I have pointed out above, man obeys by confessing, publicly, his acceptance of Jesus Christ as his Saviour; and by publicly demonstrating, by the act of baptism, that he is a new-born, blood-washed son of God.

God meets these simple acts, if from the heart, by his great miraculous new birth, which we call Salvation, making the person a new creature in Christ Jesus.

The water and the Spirit, as Jesus explained them to Nicodemus, represent these two sides of Salvation: man's part of submission and obedience, after believing; and God's great part of saving the man, the new birth.

In I John 5: 6-8, we find these two parts coupled together again: the water and the blood:

"This is he that came by water and blood, even Jesus Christ, not by water only, but by water and blood."

Jesus was not only baptized in water at the beginning of his ministry; He was baptized in his own blood at the close of his earthly ministry—the blood that cleanses us from sin. (Luke 12: 50) The cleansing of the first baptism was a portent of the greater power of the latter, but it was important enough that it must not be left out if He were to "fulfill all righteousness."

Then John goes on:

"And it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth.

"For there are three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost: and these three are one.

"And there are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the Water, and the blood: and these three **AGREE** in one."

According to that Scripture, water or Baptism, is important enough to be classed with the Spirit and the Blood. They all agree.

If we need the Spirit, if we need the shed blood, then we need the water, the baptism, which is our act of faith and obedience, our testimony that we do Believe.

Anything less is rebellion against God's Word and Christ's plan of Salvation.

Some will indignantly ask perhaps, "Do you mean that my dear saintly mother, who was only sprinkled, wasn't saved?"

I can not speak for those who knew not the truth, but who walked in all the light they had, did what they were taught, not knowing any better.

But I believe anyone who has received Light on God's Word concerning Baptism, will be **GLAD** to be baptized the Bible way, as Jesus was, the disciples were, the Eunuch was, Paul, was, the jailor was the 3,000 were on the day of Pentecost.

And, that, no matter if they were baptized as a baby or sprinkled as an adult.

We need to "draw nigh to God" in the spirit of humility, meekness and obedience, not in rebellious argument. We need to ask trembling as Paul did, "Lord, what would thou have me do?" And then do as Paul did when the Lord sent Ananias to tell him what to do—get up and **DO** it!

The saintly Brother Rufus Moseley, who had gone many places in his search for more of God, once told me that he had been baptized seven times. Obviously, when he got with a new group who thought they "had all the truth," they requested him to be baptized "their way," or "by them."

Instead of stiffening his neck and refusing, he took another baptism in his loving stride, knowing it wouldn't hurt him any, and that it might prove a blessing. Somewhat like Jesus did, he submitted though knowing he didn't "need" it, perhaps needed it much less than those who insisted on him being baptized again.

I was baptized when a boy of 14 in a stock tank in cold, icy weather. But after some years I slipped away from God.

When God drew me back to Him and called me to be his minister, I felt like I needed a "good bath." So I went to another minister and asked him to baptize me again. As I did this, I was remembering what Jesus did in being baptized though He knew He didn't need it. In my case, I needed cleansing, though the church I had been attending thought another baptism was unnecessary—as the "first one was still good." I have gladly baptized others the second time in similar circumstances, when they have felt they wanted to take a new start, after failing God.

I felt I had rather humble myself and be baptized again, than to run the risk of disobeying the Bible and displeasing God. And I have been very glad that God gave me the grace to see it that way.

In closing, I will repeat what Peter said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" (Acts 10: 47)

I feel led to print your letter and my answer, because so many people seem confused on this very sacred and important command of Jesus.

"Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Teaching them to observe ALL (not just a part) things whatsoever I have commanded you." (Matt. 28: 19-20)

Sincerely,
J. A. D.

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"Say What God Says"

Says T. L. Osborn

Be the master of your words. Harness your vocabulary. Bring your lips under subjection. Think before you speak. Say what God says. Don't contradict Him. Sooner than you can imagine, a revolution will take place in your life. You will find yourself living the abundant life set forth in God's Word.

Young people, you can train your mind to think the way God thinks; you can develop a vocabulary that agrees with God; you can teach yourself to act according to His Word. By starting while you are young, you can enjoy a lifetime of unlimited success, of robust health and unblemished happiness in the center of God's Will.

Before you become set in your ways, you can make a fresh inspection of God's Word on your own and formulate your entire life in harmony with God's abundant life.

Higher Level Living

Believe you are what God says you are. Think that way. Train yourself to live on the level of what is written in the Word of God about you.

Do not permit your thoughts, your words or your actions to contradict what God says about you. Practice thinking and speaking, and acting His Word.

Although you will not master the secret in a day, or a week, you will learn it if you practice it. Before you hardly realize it, your friends will be talking about the strange new magic in your life and personality.

You see, Jesus commanded: "Have faith in God" — or "Have the faith of God."

Then we are told, "Faith cometh by hearing — the Word of God." After hearing the Word, then it begins to possess your "heart" and "mouth" (Romans 10:8). Paul said: "The Word is . . . even in thy mouth, and in thy heart."

When a sinner is converted, first: He BELIEVES on the Lord Jesus Christ and that God raised Him from the dead, then his CONFESSION is made unto salvation. (Romans 10-9, 10).

God fulfills all of His promises the same way.

FIRST: You hear the promise; that creates faith; SECOND: You believe that promise; THIRD: You confess that promise; you talk it; your overflowing heart confesses the word of promise in gladness and assurance; FOURTH: You act accordingly and God delights to make it good.

Confession First

It's when you confess the promise out loud that you establish what your heart is really full of.

"From the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh" (Mt. 12:34).

When your heart really agrees with the Word, your lips will speak your confession.

"Confession is made UNTO salvation." Not salvation first — then confession. If you believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, He demands that you confess His Lordship. Confess your faith in Him, then salvation comes.

Healing, success, happiness all come the same way. See what God's Word says about the matter. Let your heart ponder it until it overflows. Out of your abundant heart, you will speak out the Word. You will talk it as though it's yours. You are convinced. You confess it, and behold God works a miracle and it is so.

Your confession imprisons you, or it sets you free. Your words defeat you or set the pace for a lifetime of success. Your words build into you fear and anxiety or they build faith and strength in your character.

Your life will invariably go to the level of your confession. This seems strange to some people, but really this principle is very logical. You see, "from the abundance of your heart, your mouth speaks" — automatically.

Your confession is really a natural overflow of what springs from your innermost being — your heart.

Conquering Hearts

If your heart is filled with fear, you will talk fear, and your fears will increase.

The amazing thing is that when you speak, those fears immediately grip you tighter than ever.

To overcome this, fill your heart with the Word of God. Then when you are tempted to doubt, make your lips voice the Word instead of the fear. Because He hath said, "Thanks be unto God who always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (II Co. 2:14), we may boldly say, "I am more than a conqueror through Christ who loves me."

Because He hath said, "Call unto me and I will answer thee and shew thee great, and mighty things which thou knowest not" (Je. 33:3), we may boldly say, "The Lord is answering me and showing me great things because I am calling unto Him."

Because He hath said, "A new commandment I give unto you, that ye love one another; as I have loved you" (Jn. 13:34), we may boldly say, "I can love even as Christ loved me, for His love is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost."

Because he hath said, "The Lord will give strength unto His people" (Ps. 29:11), we may boldly say, "The Lord is the strength of my life."

Because he hath said, " whatsoever ye shall ask in My Name, that will I do that the Father may be glorified in the Son" (Jn. 14:13), we may boldly say, "The Father is being glorified in the Son because He is doing great things for me as I ask in His Name."

Because he hath said, "My joy shall be in you, and your joy shall be full," we may boldly say, "His joy is mine, and my joy is now full."

Untroubled Hearts

Because he hath said, "My peace I give unto you — Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." We may boldly say, "Being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ (Ro. 5:1). for He is our peace (Ep. 2:14), and therefore my heart is not troubled or fearful."

Because he hath said, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37:4), we may boldly say, "The Lord is grant-

ing me the desires of my heart, for I am delighting myself in Him."

Because he hath said, "Ye shall receive power after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you" (Ac. 1:8), we may boldly say "I now have power for I have the Holy Spirit within."

Because he hath said, "No good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly" (Ps. 84:11), we may boldly say, "The Lord is withholding no good thing from me because I am walking upright before Him."

Because he hath said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus" (Ro. 8:1), we may boldly say, "I have no condemnation, for I am in Christ."

Because He hath said, "If ye abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ye shall ask what ye will and it shall be done unto you" (Jn. 15:7), we may boldly say, "I am abiding in Christ, He is living in me, and He is answering my petitions because I am asking what I will."

Because He hath said, "Blessed are the pure in heart for they shall see God" (Mt. 5:8), we may boldly say, "By His grace I shall see God, for the blood of Christ hath made me pure in heart."

Because He hath said, "Casting all your cares upon Him; for He careth for you" (I Pt. 5:7), we may boldly say, "I am carefree because all my cares are cast upon the Lord."

Because He hath said, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth Me" (Ps. 50:23), we may boldly say, "I am glorifying my Creator by praising Him."

Because He hath said, "Ask and ye shall receive, that your joy may be full" (Jn. 16:24), we may boldly say, "My joy is full because I am asking and receiving in Jesus Name."

Because He hath said, "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on Thee: for he trusteth in Thee" (Is. 26:3), we may boldly say, "I have His perfect peace because my mind is stayed upon Him."

Because He hath said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God" (Mt. 4:4), we may boldly say, "I have esteemed Thy Word more than my necessary food."

I Have Come

Because He hath said, "Him that cometh unto Me, I will in no wise cast out" (Jn. 6:37), we may boldly say, "I have come with my sins, burdens and failures, and the Lord has taken me in."

Because He hath said, "My God shall

supply all your needs according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus" (Ph. 4:19), we may boldly say, "I have every need supplied through His great riches toward me."

Because He hath said, "For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord" (Jer. 30:17), we may boldly say, "The Lord restores my health and heals me now because that is His word, and it cannot fail."

Because He hath said, "What things soever ye desire, when ye pray, believe that ye receive them, and ye shall have them" (Mk. 11:24), we may boldly say, "I shall have my heart's desire because I have prayed for it and I believe it is mine even now."

Because He hath said, "The Lord shall deliver me from every evil work" (II Ti. 4:18), we may say, "I will not fall into any of the devil's evil snares; the Lord delivers me."

Because he hath said, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength" (Is. 40:31), we may boldly say, "My strength is being renewed now because I am waiting on Him."

Because He hath said, "Unto you that fear my Name shall the Sun of righteousness arise with healing in his wings" (Mal. 4:2), we may boldly say, "The Lord is arising with healing for me now because I fear His Name."

Because He hath said, "The angel of the Lord encampeth round about them that fear Him" (Ps. 34:7), we may boldly say, "The angel of the Lord makes camp

around me to deliver me and to protect me because I do fear the Lord."

Healing Is Mine

Because He hath said, "He sent His word, and healeth them" (Ps. 107:20), we may boldly say, "Healing is mine now; the Lord is healing me through His Word because I have received His word in my life."

Because He hath said, "Everyone that asketh receiveth" (Mt. 7:8), we may boldly say, "I know I am receiving, because I have asked, everyone means no exceptions — it includes me."

Because He hath said, "There shall no evil befall thee, neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling" (Ps. 91:10), we may boldly say, "I am not afraid of disease nor evil; it cannot come to my place; I am protected and free."

Because He hath said, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and He shall give thee the desires of thine heart" (Ps. 37:4) we may boldly say, "The Lord is giving me my heart's desires, because I am delighted with Him in my life."

Because He hath said, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in Him; and He shall bring it to pass" (Ps. 37:5), we may boldly say, "The Lord is working out every detail of my life, because I have made a committal of it to Him and I am fully trusting Him."

Practice agreeing with God. Accept what He says. Believe you are what He says you are. Believe you can do what He says you can do. Believe God in what He says He is and that He will do and is doing what He says in His Word.

Think of yourself like God thinks of you.

Say what God says about you in His Word. Confess that you can do what He says you can do. God can be no bigger in your life than you confess Him to be. You can advance no farther than your confession. You will never rise above your own words.

You will be what God's Word says you are. You will begin doing what His Word says you can do. As you speak out the Word, it increases its influence on your whole being; you become stronger through the Words of faith which come from your lips.

Then you go on, and on, determined to say what God says, instead of what you feel or fear; sooner than you can imagine, the Word comes to dominate you; it influences your real thinking; you actually come to state it from your heart.

—Faith Digest

COMMITMENT

by Gene Neill

We will send up to 10 Reprints of Gene Neill's Amazing Account of his three months in the Soviet Union — Witnessing for Jesus, Speaking to Underground Churches, Arrested three times, and the Total Commitment of Russian Christians—Postpaid to anyone who will prayerfully distribute them for God's Glory and the Salvation of Souls.

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Fearfully and Wonderfully Made

By Jack Exum

There are few marvels of the universe that even begin to compare with the human body. The wizardry of man, the gimmicks, the gadgets, the glitter of it all fades away when contrasted to the functions of the body. The framework itself is, with over 200 bones, more durable than steel with every joint tightly enclosed, moving in a constant bath of oil and at the same time, producing its own oil.

The average person develops 2,500 calories a day, which is enough to heat and boil 25 pots of coffee. Within the brain there is a thermostat with its own nervous system. If part of the body gets too hot or too cold, signals are sent to the control center and the blood vessels of the skin contract or are enlarged to give off more or less heat. No air-conditioning system man has ever developed even comes close to the one God gave you.

The electrical system of the body is beyond imagination. The brain contains 10 million nerve cells. Your eyes are connected to your brain by 3,000,000 separate and private "telephone lines."

The best mechanical hand ever developed is but a clumsy feeble effort compared to the hand God gave man. What mechanical hand paints a picture or plays the organ or performs a delicate surgical operation?

Your eye is the most expensive camera known to man. It comes with built in adjustment and with an automatic system no other camera has ever known. Each eye contains a hundred million nerve cells, which work together perfectly to allow you to see close up and at great distances in living color.

Your ears have a keyboard of 1,500 keys. The average piano has 88. The human ear is so sensitive that in a completely soundproof room you can actually hear the blood flowing through your vessels.

The average heart pumps blood through a system of thousands of miles of blood vessels, while resting a sixteenth of every second. That totals up to about six hours a day or about 20 years during a normal lifespan that the heart rests.

The mind of man defies comparison. With ability to reason, to remember, to

plan—with intellect and conscience, and emotions—it is where God Himself can dwell. Consider God's masterpiece—the human body.

No wonder the Scriptures say, "We are fearfully and wonderfully made. — Gospel Light.

—THE TRUTH

Life After Death By Mike Bates

ONE of the main questions of this day and age is, "What happens after you die? Is that all?" A common answer to that is, "You won't really know for sure until you do die", "We'll all find out sooner or later." A lot of people think that death ends it all, but really it's just the beginning of one of two things, heaven or hell.

GOD lets the individual determine where he wants to go by the way he lives while he's on earth. If he lives the way God tells him to, then he'll go to heaven; but if he doesn't, then he shouldn't expect to see heaven. I don't think people take heaven and hell very seriously. They think they're more of a legend or a myth, than two places only a heartbeat away. Let's face it, I don't believe anybody wants to go to hell, but

"The true Christian is like ripening wheat — the higher it grows, the more it bows its head."

—Fred Jordan, American Soul Clinic.

yet people go there every day, and then it's too late. Once you're in, there's no way to get out. It doesn't matter how sorry you are then: you had your chance while you were alive on earth.

JESUS says that anyone who believes in Him to save them and lives for Him will have eternal life. There is no eternal doom awaiting those who trust Him to save them; but all those who don't, have already been tried and condemned.

GOD sent His own son in a human body like ours, except that ours are sinful, to destroy sin's control over us by giving Himself as a sacrifice for our sins. So now we can obey God's laws if we follow after the Holy Spirit and no longer obey the old evil nature within us. Following after the Holy Spirit leads to life and peace, but following after the old nature leads to death, because it's against God.

ANYONE that doesn't have the Spirit of Christ living in him is not a Christian at all. Yet, even though Christ is living in us, our bodies will die because of sin; but our spirits will live, for Christ has pardoned us. And if the Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in us, He will make our dying bodies live again after death.

I BELIEVE that when the world realizes this, it will be a better place.

—Mike Bates

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