

Could You Sign Your Name to This?

Dear God in Heaven:

Author Unknown

fish, golf or visit the folks. Please try to understand and don't hold

I want to write you and let you know why we don't attend the worship services faithfully. You have chosen for your day a day that comes at the end of a hard week when we are all tired out. Also, it comes just after Saturday night and that is the night we feel we should enjoy ourselves and take in a movie or ball game or a party and it is usually after midnight when we get to sleep. You have chosen the very day that we need to sleep late. Then, too, my family demands a big Sunday dinner and when I get up 90 minutes late, I can't get all this prepared and make it to Bible study and preaching. John likes to read the Sunday sports page and the kids want to read the funnies I mean no disrespect, but it seems to me you picked the wrong day.

this against us.

Last Sunday we meant to go to worship but had company. The Sunday before we meant to go, but it was raining. I was telling John last night that we just had to get straightened out and get back to worship or people would think we had quit. You know how people are to talk.

I wanted to tell you all these things so that you could see our viewpoint and know that it is really not our fault we do not go to worship. And don't think we do not love you, dear God, for we do. We love the church too, and have been faithful members for years, and we expect to die in it and go home to Glory.

Then, too, we must think of John. He works so hard all week and Sunday is about the only day he has to catch up on odd jobs around the house. I also feel that he should have one day a week to sleep,

Faithfully,
Minnie Saints
Kareless City, U.S.A.



The North Charlottesville church of Christ

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SCHEDULE OF SERVICES

Sunday
Bible Class (children and adults).....10:00 AM
Morning Worship Service.....11:00 AM
Afternoon Worship Service..... 3:00 PM

Thursday
Bible Class (children and adults).....7:35 PM

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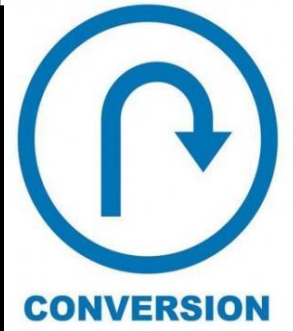
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Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. (Matthew 5:16)

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“Into What Were You baptized?”

By Tom Hamilton

Paul met "certain disciples" at Ephesus in **Acts 19**. Paul knew that these men were "disciples" or followers of God, but he also knew that they were not Christians. Therefore, the question Paul put to them was, "Into what therefore were you baptized?" We, like Paul in this example, will not deny that others may believe in God, may have had a religious experience, or may have some attachment to God. But we must also ask the same question that Paul did. *Into what were you baptized?* Our answer to this question will determine the validity of our religious experience and our relationship to God, just as it did those many centuries ago.

ter, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water . . ." The fact that Paul refers to baptism as a "burial" (**Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12**) also indicates that baptism involves a complete covering over or a total submersion into water. Of course, our answer should agree with what the New Testament says that we are to be baptized into.

Therefore, we must not simply be baptized by water or with water, but *into* water. Have you been baptized into water?

Baptized Into Death

Paul says in **Romans 6:3-4**, "Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ have been baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." In the same way that Jesus physically died, was buried, and raised from the dead, we spiritually die to sin, are buried in baptism, and are raised again. Our old sinful self has been crucified and we have made a complete break with our sinful past, therefore we should not sin anymore, but rather live a new life (**Rom. 6:5-6**). Notice that our spiritual resurrec-

Baptized Into Water

Jesus was himself baptized as an example for us to follow. In **Mark 1:9**, we read that "Jesus was baptized by John in (lit. 'into') the Jordan river." This expression does not make much sense unless we also understand that baptism means "immersion" Jesus was immersed into the waters of the Jordan River. That is why the next verse says, "When Jesus came up out of the water..." This example of Jesus set the pattern for all believers to follow. For example, in Acts 8:38 we read of the Ethiopian's baptism ". . . and they both went down into the wa-

(Continued on page 2)

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Inside This Issue...
Editorial - Pages 1-2
"Into What Were You Baptized?"
Page 3
Emphasis on Baptism
Page 4 – On the Back
Could You Sign Your Name to This?

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(Continued from page 1)

tion follows, not precedes, being baptized. The correct order death, burial, and then resurrection must be preserved if we are to be right with God. Spiritual resurrection and renewal can only take place *after* baptism.

Have you been baptized into death and then raised to eternal life?

Baptized Into the Name

Jesus commanded his disciples in **Matthew 28:19**, "Go therefore and disciple the nations, baptizing them in (lit. 'into') the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things I have commanded you." **Acts 8:16** and **19:5** also speak of being baptized into the name of Jesus. While other passages speak of being baptized in or by the name of Jesus, baptism into the name of Jesus carries a little different meaning. It is a figure of speech for ownership, indicating that one rightfully wears the name of his owner. Notice in **1 Corinthians 1:10-17**, Paul says that nobody was baptized into Paul's name and, therefore, nobody could claim to "belong" to Paul. On the other hand, if we are baptized into Jesus' name, then we belong to him. It also makes it clear that we do not belong to Jesus and cannot rightfully wear his name as our owner until we are baptized.

Have you entered into the realm of Christ's ownership, having been baptized into his name?

Baptized Into Forgiveness

Peter says in **Acts 2:38**, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for (lit. 'into') the forgiveness of your sins." Here we find the answer to the very simple question, How does one enter into the forgiveness of one's sins? Peter says that we enter into forgiveness through baptism. This also means that until one is baptized, one has not entered into the forgiveness of his sins. This does not mean that we are saving ourselves. Peter explains elsewhere that baptism saves us, not of our own power, but simply because we are faithfully doing what God has said in order that we may have a clear conscience (**1 Pet. 3:21**).

Therefore, we must be baptized in water out of obedience to God in order to receive the forgiveness of our sins. Have you been baptized into the

forgiveness of your sins?

Baptized Into the Body of Christ

Paul says in **1 Corinthians 12:13**, "For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body." Paul pictures the church the group of all the saved as a body with its many members. But how does one get into Christ's body? While people will give many different answers to this question, there is only one Bible answer baptized into the body! One does not enter into Christ's body and then afterwards get baptized. Also, this means that one is outside of Christ's body until baptized to enter into it.

Therefore, to be a member of Christ's body, we must be baptized. Have you been baptized into the body?

Baptized Into Christ

Finally, the Bible tells us not once, but twice, that we are baptized into Christ. We have already quoted **Romans 6:3-4** when noting the expression "baptized into death." Note also **Galatians 3:27**, "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." How do we get into Christ? Again, while many give conflicting answers, there is only one biblical answer. If you want to agree with what the Bible says on the subject, you must agree that one can enter into Christ only by being baptized into Christ. This also means that one is not in Christ until one enters into Christ through baptism. It also means that one does not get into Christ and then get baptized afterwards, as many teach.

If you believe that you are now in Christ, how did you get into him? At what point did you go from being outside of Christ to being in Christ? Have you been baptized into Christ?

Conclusion

These are not, of course, six different baptisms that the Bible is talking about. The Bible is simply telling us the six things that we are baptized into when we are properly baptized out of obedience to God.

When we are immersed into the waters of baptism, we bury our dead previous life of sin, enter under Christ's ownership, receive the forgiveness of our sins, become members of the body of Christ, and enjoy all of the blessings of God that are to be had by those who are in Christ, having entered into him by baptism.



Emphasis on Baptism

By Robert Turner

This story is told about a preacher who preached on the subject of baptism, sermon after sermon. Finally one member, in desperation, asked him to preach on **Gen. 1:1**, or creation. The preacher began, "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth-- the clouds, the land, and the water-- which reminds me---" so they had another sermon on baptism.

It is expedient for us to discuss more thoroughly those subjects about which there is greatest misunderstanding; hence, baptism has had a multiple work-out. Some of us may have emphasized this subject to the neglect of other important topics, but we have not violated the scriptures in teaching the necessity of baptism.

The great commission, sending the Apostles into all the world, and putting in motion the church as a teaching institution, is very clear on the subject. Matthew records Christ as saying, "--teach all nations, baptizing them--" and Mark reports, "he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved--" (**Matt. 28:19 Mk. 16:16**) In the first application of this commission (**Acts 2:38**) Peter commands, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

In the cases of conversion recorded in the Acts of the Apostles on must be blind indeed not to see baptism. On Pentecost, in Samaria, the eunuch, Saul, Cornelius, Lydia, the Philippians, Corinthians, Ephesians-- all were baptized. The evidence is so profuse that discussion is limited by space and time--

not material.

Then the epistles confirm our findings from Acts of the Apostles. Paul wrote, "Know ye not that so many of us as 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." Did Paul "overemphasize"? (**Rom. 6:3-4**)

Water was the dividing line between a sin-cursed generation and the clean new world in Noah's time; and Peter said, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us--". (**1 Pet. 3:21**) The negative clause, ("not the putting away of the filth of the flesh--") eliminates direct physical cleansing ("water salvation" as some put it) but actually strengthens the truth. Baptism, a figure, is a God-given figure, required of all who would be saved.

Whatever God requires of us in order to our salvation, may be said to "save" us. This is true of faith. If God had not made faith a condition of salvation, there would be no propriety in saying we are "saved by faith." Thus, when Peter says we are saved by this figure, baptism; he is fully consistent with every passage that shows baptism is commanded "for the remission of sins." (**See Acts 2:38**)

Should we emphasize "baptism"? To the extent this is needed in order to save men's souls -- YES! And woe to the weak in faith who ignore it.

