

God's will is not an itinerary but an attitude

MISSIONARY

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The Baptist Examiner

Baptist Is Our Middle Name**Paid Circulation in All States and in Many Foreign Countries***"To the law and to the testimony; if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them" — Isaiah 8:20.*

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THE PEARL OF GREAT PRICE

By Pastor Willard Willis, Northland Missionary Baptist Church, Columbus, Ohio



"Again, the kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls: Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matthew 13:45, 46).

The merchant man, to which our text makes reference, is none other than our Lord Jesus Christ. He is the one who sold all that He had, that is, He gave his life in order to purchase the pearl of great price.

It is to be noted, first of all, that the merchant man desired the pearl of great price. He, in fact, had set His heart upon the pearl and would not, under any circumstances, be turned away from His objective. The extent to which His heart was set upon the pearl is seen in that He sold all that He had in His effort to obtain the pearl.

Our inquiry leads us to ask, What does the pearl of great price represent? We will find our answer in our Lord's purchase of His blood washed church. We, of course, know that our Lord's churches are made up of totally depraved sinners. How, then, can they be referred to as having a great price? Why would our Lord set His heart upon His church and sell all that He had in order to purchase her? The answer to our inquiry rests in an agreement made between the Father and the Son in eternity past. The Father, in fact, chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4, 5). God the Spirit was also involved in that agree-

ment in that He agreed to communicate the work wrought by the Son to all the elect. Let us not forget that the over-riding factor even above God's election of us is the love of God for us. We, in fact, in Ephesians 1:4 read: "...before him in love." We also read from John 3:16 "For God so loved the world...."

The love, then, that our Lord has for His church is not a passing fancy, or a few words and a pat on the back. His love is eternal and for this reason His love will never let us go. His love, in fact, is such that it has prompted Him to go to prepare a place for us where we will always be by His side.

Let us now ask why the pearl had such a great price. Why did the price of the pearl match the wealth of the merchant man? The merchant man, after all, was required to sell all that He had in purchasing the pearl. He, in other words, could not have purchased the pearl if He had only sold one third of His belongings, or even ninety nine percent of His possessions. He was required to sell one hundred percent, since such was the price of

the pearl.

The reference to all that He had, of course, refers to the giving of the life of our Lord at a place called Calvary. The life of the flesh, after all, is in the blood and the Lord Jesus, in the giving of His blood, gave His all for us. This was the great price that was paid. We, of course, know from Hebrews 9:22 that without shedding of blood there is no remission for sins. The following passages of Scripture also informs us relative to the great price paid by our Saviour.

"Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot" (I Pet. 1:18, 19).

It is to be carefully noted from our text that the merchant man sought the pearl. The pearl, after all, in Adam, had gone into the far country away from God and was content to remain there in a state of gross darkness and without any

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A CERTAINTY

By Pastor Edward G. Graff, Grace Central Baptist Church, Mansfield, Louisiana



Certainty meaning: Beyond a doubt, a state of being certain, a clearly established fact, a definite, fixed, indisputable fact; freedom from any doubt based on thorough examination of all evidence. Accordingly, we have Paul speaking to the believers at the assembly at Thessalonica about the believing dead. Paul saw that some were unsettled, and uncertain about the believing dead having hope of sharing in the glorious reign of Christ.

We find Paul's answer in I Thessalonians 4:13-18 **"I would not have you to be ignorant, brethren, concerning them which are asleep, that ye sorrow not, even as others which have no hope. For if we believe [and we do] that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him. For this we say unto you by the word of the Lord, that we which are alive and remain unto the coming of the Lord shall not prevent them which asleep. For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up [that is, raptured out] together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air: and so shall we ever be with the Lord. Wherefore [or, because of that fact] comfort one another with these words."** The question is this: Does the death of a believer, before the Lord Jesus Christ comes for His people, cause

that believer to lose all hope of sharing in the glorious reign of Christ? Paul in this passage gives to the believers, of that day, and to us also, a reassuring affirmation that the dead in Christ will be raised, and will share in the kingdom.

Notice what Paul says, in verse thirteen, to those who were afraid for their dead loved ones in Christ, **"We do not want you to be uninformed—about those who are asleep (in the grave)—that you may not grieve, as do the rest (the unbelievers) who have not hope."** Those that are asleep—the body (not the soul) of the believer who dies is said to sleep during the time between death, and the resurrection. The unbeliever has no hope beyond the grave, because all hope is gone when the grave closes over them. But, the believer does have hope, because the believer shall hear a clear, and discriminating call, at the rapture, saying, **"My Beloved, come to me!"**

Paul goes on to say, in verse fourteen, **"For if we believe, that is, since we do believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead—the certainty of the believer's resurrection is based on the fact of Christ's resurrection—because of that fact—even so God will raise up the believer from their grave (whether that grave be the sea, or the dry earth, whether their grave is marked, unmarked, or no known grave at all) we shall all see Jesus Christ at the same time—A certainty, it is!"** This Paul declares to you, in verse fifteen, that by the Lord's own Word, that we who are alive, at the rapture, shall not precede into Christ's presence before, or have any advantage at all over, those who have before hand fallen asleep (in Christ, in death).

Now let's look further at verse fifteen, by way of II Corinthians 4:14, **"Knowing that he which raised up the Lord Jesus shall raise up us also by Jesus, and"** (Continued on Page 3)

The Baptist Examiner Pulpit

A Sermon by Pastor Eugene P. Helton

WHO IS QUALIFIED TO CAST THE FIRST STONE?

"Jesus went unto the mount of Olives. And early in the morning he came again into the temple, and all the people came unto him; and he sat down, and taught them. And the scribes and Pharisees brought unto him a woman taken in adultery; and when they had set her in the midst, They say unto him, Master, this



woman was taken in adultery, in the very act. Now Moses in the law commanded us, that such should be stoned: but what sayest thou? This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him. But Jesus stooped down, and with his finger wrote on the ground, as though he (Continued on Page 2)

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

Eugene P. Helton

Editor

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FIRST STONE

(Continued from Page 1)

heard them not. So when they continued asking him, he lifted up himself, and said unto them, **He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. And again he stooped down, and wrote on the ground. And they which heard it, being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one, beginning at the eldest, even unto the last: and Jesus was left alone, and the woman standing in the midst. When Jesus had lifted up himself, and saw none but the woman, he said unto her, Woman, where are those thine accusers? hath no man con-**

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JANUARY 1, 1995

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Editor's Update

By Pastor Eugene P. Helton, Editor

Greetings in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

This being the first edition of The Baptist Examiner for 1995, I want to take this opportunity to express my desire that you prosper in your service to our Lord through out the coming year. Many folks in churches (pastors included) look forward into a new year and see many obstacles that will prevent them from being successful as a growing fruit-bearing church. Many times, lack of success is attributed to being true to the Word of God. My Bible teaches me that faithfulness in being true to the Word of God in His churches will result in success not failure.

We here at Calvary Baptist Church are looking forward to 1995 and we see many opportunities to serve our Lord and bring glory to Him in His church. **"Where there is no vision, the people perish..."** (Proverbs 29:18). If we are faithful in our service to the Lord during the coming year, Calvary will be a stronger and a more spiritual church at the end of 1995 than it is today.

Connie and I just returned from a wonderful family Thanksgiving gathering. The two of us; our three daughters; each of their husbands; and our three granddaughters, all were together at Robins Air Force Base in Georgia, to celebrate Thanksgiving Day. My, do we have so much for which to thank our Lord. How the Lord has blessed our family! I know that there are many many others who are equally blessed as I, however, sometimes I feel that I'm the most blessed person on earth. I feel compelled to tell the world of the Lord's goodness to me. My words always seem insufficient to adequately declare the goodness of the Lord. But I must try; and you must try. **"Oh that men would praise the Lord for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men! And let them sacrifice the sacrifices of thanksgiving, and declare his works with rejoicing"** (Psalm 107:21-22).

May our Lord bless you and your church in 1995!

demned thee? She said, No man, Lord. And Jesus said unto her, **Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more**" (John 8:1-11).

Christians can easily see the vanity and legalism of the Pharisee. What some Christians fail to see is that they try to practice Christianity in much the same way. Sometimes Christians individually and Christians collectively, i.e. a church, resort to casting stones.

As we begin to examine the above passage of Scripture, we find the Lord teaching as He always was, either by word or example. Many of the Pharisees had opportunity to hear the Lord teach, but most never learned the lessons of warning of their unscriptural judgments and legalistic actions. Many today, though pronouncing themselves to be doctrinally sound and more knowledgeable than most every one else, seem to find it difficult to learn these same lessons. Some seem to be ever learning, but somehow they never comprehend this truth. To practice Pharisaism is to be totally

unChristlike. It would seem that the words of the apostle Paul in II Timothy 3:7 would be an apt description of a people so inclined. **"Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth."** A person can learn a great deal, however, if what is learned is used in a Pharisaical manner, the cause of Christ is not helped but hindered.

As we further examine the situation of the woman taken in the very act of adultery, we find another problem that many seem to have. That is the problem of having a double standard. If the woman was taken in the very act of adultery, then what about the man? Where was he? A woman cannot commit the act of adultery by herself. What's good for the goose is good for the gander. The law was clear, both parties were guilty. **"And the man that committeth adultery with another man's wife, even he that committeth adultery with his neighbor's wife, the adulterer and the adulteress shall surely be put to death"** (Lev.

20:10). The way some interpret the order of the sexes and the doctrine of the subjection of the woman results in the woman being rendered a second class church member and having duties closely related to those of a slave. This kind of interpretation is bad interpretation. God never intended for man to use His Word to degrade and enslave the woman. The good Christian woman is to be esteemed, valued, cared for, and loved.

Notice they called the Lord, Master, probably referring to His known activity of teaching. They certainly meant no reverential respect. In all likelihood, they were mocking Him. To take His teachings and His truths and use them in unscriptural ways; in Pharisaical ways, is in effect to mock Him.

They asked the Lord, "What shall we do with this adulteress woman? Moses said that such should stoned, but what do you say?" **"This they said, tempting him, that they might have to accuse him"** (John 8:6). If He says "stone her," then they would call Him heartless. If He says "free her," then they would call Him too lenient. They felt Jesus would be subject to accusation no matter what His response was. The Lord stooped and wrote in the dust with His finger, then He stood up and said to them: **"He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her"** (John 8:7). The Scripture further states: **"Who can say, I have made my heart clean, I am pure from my sin?"** (Prov. 20:9). **"For there is not a just man upon the earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not"** (Eccl. 7:20). **"But the scripture hath concluded all under sin..."** (Gal. 3:22). The Lord stooped and wrote once again in the dust of the ground. What did He write? Maybe He wrote: **"But I say unto you, that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart"** (Matt. 5:28). **"Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, Thou shalt not kill; and whosoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment: But I say unto you, That whosoever is angry with his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment: and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca, shall be in danger of the council: but whosoever shall say, Thou fool, shall be in danger of hell fire"** (Matt. 5:21-22). These and other truths from God's Word render every person guilty in deed or thought. Whatever the Lord wrote with His finger in the dust, it re-

vealed the sins of all present, those making accusation against this woman.

We might say: "I wouldn't cast a stone in such a circumstance. I could never be like those Pharisees." What about the stone of anger for no cause? What about the stone of resentment? What about the stone of unforgiveness? What about the stone of vengeance? What about the stone of gossip? What about the stone of unfriendliness? What about the stone of unkindness? What about the stone of untruth? Are you sure you're not guilty of casting stones?

In the case of this woman, who was taken in the very act of adultery, no one was found qualified to cast a stone at her. This woman now had an advocate. **"Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us"** (Rom. 8:34). **"My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous"** (I John 2:1). This woman encountered one who showed her compassion and mercy. This woman encountered the only one who could save her by His marvellous grace. You and I can't save anyone as Jesus saves, but we can show compassion and mercy as He does. That's far better and much more effective than casting stones.

May our Lord bless us all as we follow His teachings and His example.

If you wish to
be
disappointed,
look to others.
If you wish to
be
downhearted,
look to
yourself. If
you wish to be
encouraged,
look upon
Jesus Christ.



The Baptist Examiner Bible Study Lesson

By Clyde T. Everman, Deacon
Calvary Baptist Church • Ashland, KY

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The Separation Genesis 13:5-18

"And Lot also, which went with Abram, had flocks, and herds, and tents" (v. 5). Abraham and Lot had become rich. While in Egypt their flocks and herds had increased greatly. This brought about trouble between the herdsmen of Lot and those of Abraham. "The land was not able to bare them, that they might dwell together." It is of note that "The Canaanite and the Perizzite dwelled then in the land" (v. 7), which indicates that these heathen people were witnessing the strife between Lot's men and Abraham's men. Is this not always true when there is strife between Christians, when there is strife in our churches?

How was the strife to be settled? Abraham steps in to prevent the strife becoming more involved. "And Abram said unto Lot, Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee, and between my herdmen and thy herdmen, for we be brethren" (v. 8). Note the unselfishness of Abraham. Although he is older than Lot and although the land had been promised to him by God, he gave Lot his choice as to which direction he would go. Abraham had learned his lesson while in Egypt. He knew that he could depend upon his God to take care of him where ever he went.

Verses 10-13 - Lot took his generous uncle at his word and seeing that the plain of Jordan was "well watered every where,...even as the garden of the Lord, like the land of Egypt," he did not hesitate to take the plain of Jordan, "and Lot journeyed east: and they

separated themselves one from the other" (v. 11).

The land was indeed fertile, but note the danger into which Lot moved, as "he pitched his tent toward Sodom." This was the great mistake of Lot's life, from which he ever afterward suffered. This move brought destruction to Lot and his family. For material gain he lost his family, his testimony, and finally, all his material riches.

Verses 13-17 - "After that was Lot separated from him." Now that Abraham was alone, he may have felt that he had not been wise in his offer to Lot. Had he done the right thing? Just at this time God came to him giving him the assurance and blessing which he so greatly needed. Note the revelation now made to Abraham was fuller than that which was given before. First, he was to "Lift up now thine eyes." Lot had "lifted his eyes," but this look was different from that of Abraham. It was not only a much wider look, it was a look commanded by the Lord. Lot's look was only toward Sodom and the well watered plain of Jordan. Abraham was to look northward, southward, eastward, and westward (v. 14). What was he to see? "All the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed for ever" (v. 15). This was the first time that the land had been promised to Abraham himself. "To thee will I give it". Before the promise had been to his seed (12:7). He was to walk through the land, the length and breadth of it, all was to be his. We need to note that these promises while not yet have been fully fulfilled there will surely be a

literal fulfillment of them (Rom. 11:26-29).

"And I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth." How could this be, Abraham, an old man with a wife that was barren and well beyond the age of bearing children? "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom. 4:20). Abraham believed when he knew not how.

"Then Abraham removed his tent." Abraham's immediate action was to move his tent to Mamre which is in Hebron. The word "Hebron" means "fellowship." The thought here is that prompt wholehearted obedience always leads to fellowship with God. "And built an altar unto the Lord." The tent indicates his pilgrimage and the altar his devotion to the One true God.

What lessons can we learn from this section of the Word? First let us note the contrast between Lot and Abraham as believers. Who would have ever considered Lot as a child of God if II Peter 2:7, 8 had been left out of the Bible where Lot is said to be "just" and a "righteous man." Although he had been justified and made righteous he was not living by faith but by sight. His eyes were on the well watered plains not on the Lord. He was only interested in his own advantage and his own pleasure. He is the type of Christian, who is trying to hold on to the world and all its pleasures. Like Lot, their souls are "vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked" (II Pet. 2:7), yet for material gain they dwell "among them." The apostle Paul referred to these as "carnal" (I Cor. 3:3).

But looking at Abraham we see one who is wholly following the Lord. One who has faith to trust God not only to bless him materially but also spiritually. He is the type of Christian who puts God first in his life, to whom God's presence, God's will, God's way, is all in his life.

There is a lesson to be learned from the strife that occurred between Lot and Abraham. How many of the troubles could be settled in our churches if we only took the attitude of Abraham. There are two verses in the New Testament that if we all observed and obeyed, all our church differences would disappear. We are told "Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God" (Eph. 5:21). Also, "Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble" (I Pet. 5:5). Abraham could well afford to be bighearted for his faith was in God and he could trust Him to make things right. God has given a command with a promise to all His children to "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart; and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths" (Prov. 3:5, 6). Abraham trusted in the Lord and reaped the promise. We, today could lay hold on that promise.

We need to note the results of the lives of Lot and that of Abraham. Lot obtained what he wanted, material gain, but spiritually his life was a disaster. There was no witness for God, no real blessing on his life, no real joy in

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A CERTAINTY

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shall present us with you." Assured that God raised up the Lord Jesus, we have certainty that God will also raise us up into His presence. What a blessed certainty—we shall live again with Jesus. How do we know? Let's look at verse sixteen for the answer. The Lord Jesus Christ will descend from heaven with a shout—with the voice of the archangel—a trumpet blast of God. Matthew 24:31 says "He [God] shall send forth his angels with a great sound of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the four winds, from one end of heaven to the other" (New American Standard Version). God will send forward His angels with a great trumpet, and they will gather together His elect from the four winds, from the four corners of the world from one end of the sky to the other. The Son of Man (Christ) will come visibly—there seems to be no reason for not taking this part of the teachings of Jesus as fact, as we do with all the other teachings of Jesus—the trumpet sounds, the believing dead rise, "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet; for the trumpet will sound, and the dead will be raised imperishable, and we shall be changed" (I Cor. 15:52 - NASV). We shall not all sleep, not all shall die, but all shall be changed at the trumpet call—a new body—a new life. The dead in Christ shall rise first—then the living—those believers living at the rapture. Paul said, "We who are alive" believing that he might be alive at the call of the trumpet, and we must also believe the same, and therefore live as if the Lord could come for His elect today—right now—this very minute. If we believed in an imminent rapture, as the believers did at the time of Paul, we like they, could and would turn this old world upside down. It is a certainty, we shall be caught up at the trumpet sound.

Again, take note of the text in verse sixteen, "The dead shall rise first." Then look at verse seventeen, "Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up [raptured] together with them [the dead elect] in the clouds." Raptured like Enoch, "And

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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER

JANUARY 1, 1995

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The Baptist Examiner Pulpit Forum

SUBMIT QUESTIONS ON ANY BIBLE SUBJECT

THE BAPTIST EXAMINER, P.O. BOX 60, ASHLAND, KENTUCKY 41105-0060



Explain "be baptized, and wash away thy sins" in Acts 22:16.

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To understand what is meant by "be baptized, and wash away thy sins" we must first see how our sins are put away, by what means we are cleansed from our sins. In I John 1:7 we read that "...the blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanseth us from all sin." "...By his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us" (Heb. 9:12). "How much more shall the blood of Christ...purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God" (Heb. 9:14). "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace" (Eph. 1:7). "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. 2:13). It was said of the Lamb, "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Rev. 5:9). In I Peter 1:18, 19 we are told we are redeemed "with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot."

Now as it is the blood of Christ that washes away our sin what is the meaning of "be baptized and wash away thy sins"? Is there a contradiction in the Scripture? Absolutely not! We need to only go to I Peter 3:20, 21 where we see how baptism washes away sin. In verse 20 the apostle Peter tells us how God saved Noah and his family from the flood by placing them in the ark. Then in verse

21 we are told that as the saving of Noah was a picture, a figure of our salvation, "The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us." What Peter has said is we have two pictures of our salvation, Noah and his family in the ark and our baptism. It would seem that, knowing that some would make baptism a means of salvation instead of just a picture of that salvation, the Holy Spirit had Peter to add "not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God."

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"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

When studying God's Word it is necessary to study a verse in relation to the rest of the Scripture relating to that subject. Always remember that God does not contradict Himself, and if one verse seems to teach contrary to other Scriptures it must be evaluated to determine its meaning.

Since it is clear that salvation is by the grace of God (Eph. 2:8, 9) and not by our works (Titus 3:4-7), we must understand that baptism cannot and does not save. Since it is also clear that our sins are washed in the blood of Jesus (see Rev. 1:5; I Cor. 6:11) we certainly don't need anything else to wash them away.

With these things in mind let us study this verse. Our verse in question says to be baptized "calling on the name of the Lord." Romans 10:14 says "How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in him in whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" We see then that the gospel must be preached, we must hear (by the

quickening power of the Holy Spirit) and believe (which is salvation) before we can call on the Lord. In verse 13 of Acts 22, Ananias came and called Saul "Brother Saul" indicating that he knew that Saul was saved.

Baptism is an act of faith, it is a work of righteousness. Jesus Himself told us so when He was baptized as recorded in Matthew 3:13-17. We have already seen that we are not saved by a work of righteousness in Titus 3. It is a picture or symbol of our salvation as explained in I Peter 3:21. The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

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Most certainly this and some other verses of the Bible are often quoted to prove that water baptism is necessary for salvation. It is believed by many in more than one denomination that water at the moment of baptism washes away former and present sins. This of course, is not taught in the Scriptures when all Scripture is examined and compared on the subject of baptism. For our purposes, however, I want to call our attention to some facts that will help us to understand the phrase "be baptized and wash away thy sins."

To know when Paul was saved is needful to throw light on the questioned phrase. I believe Paul was saved on the road to Damascus. The Lord Jesus Himself spoke the gospel directly to Paul there when he was struck down. "But I certify, you brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man,

neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Gal. 1:11-12). He did not receive the gospel later at the house of Ananias. Paul had already submitted to Christ as he testifies in Acts 22:10. Paul was filled with the Holy Spirit before he was baptized as we are told in Acts 9:17-18 "And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, even Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized." We must also note the last phrase in verse 16. The aorist participle can be translated "having called on His name" thus we believe that Paul was saved before he was baptized.

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There is definitely one thing this passage does not teach. It does not teach that regeneration (new birth) is caused by baptism. Baptism is the believers testimony to our death, burial, and resurrection with the Lord Jesus Christ through faith. It is the duty of every believer to submit to the ordinance, not as a matter of salvation, but as a matter of obedience. Baptism is always represented as the outward testimony of an inward change not vice-versa. In Acts 22:16 the passage has nothing at all to do with water taking away sin. Besides, that is a physical impossibility. Water may cleanse your body but the purest water on earth cannot cleanse your soul! The literal rendering of this verse is: "Now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized as thy sins are washed

away, calling on the name of the Lord." When speaking in reference to the conversion of the apostle Paul, then called Saul of Tarsus, Scripture plainly tells us that he was a chosen vessel before he was baptized. In fact Ananias calls him "brother" before he baptized him (See Acts 9:17). In another passage in Acts 8 we find the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch. If you study the narrative you will plainly see that this man had complete faith in Jesus Christ before he was immersed. He was saved before he was baptized. He said to Phillip "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." In Acts 10:43 the Bible says, "To him give all the prophets witness, that through his name whosoever believeth in him shall receive remission of sins." It does not say, whosoever believe and is baptized shall receive remission. After the Gentiles believed and received remission from their faith in Christ, the apostle said, "Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?" They were immersed after they believed unto remission of sins!

JACK C. WHITT

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TEACHER:

Calvary Baptist Church
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"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

The apostle Paul is here declaring his conversion experience as he was on the road to Damascus. It is necessary to point out that Paul's conversion had already taken place prior to his reaching Damascus and meeting with Ananias (compare with Acts 9). One moment, He was breathing out threatenings and slaughter against the disciples of the Lord. But then SUDDENLY there shined round about him a light

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TOUCHING JESUS

By Jack Whitt

"And Jesus said, Who touched me? When all denied, Peter and they that were with him said, Master, the multitude throng thee and press thee, and sayest thou, Who touched me? And Jesus said, Somebody hath touched me: for I perceive that virtue is gone out of me. And when the woman saw that she was not hid, she came trembling, and falling down before him, she declared unto him before all the people for what cause she had touched him, and how she was healed immediately. And He said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace" (Luke 8:45-48). We may see in type a parallel to this account given of the woman finding Jesus, and her subsequent healing in her body.

Of the multitudes of churchgoers who throng the many sanctuaries of our land today, how many of such number go seeking

and desiring close contact with Jesus? Peter said to Jesus, "The multitude throng thee and press thee." And is it not true that so many who come to God's house, some faithfully, yet know little of the real purpose for their being there? It is feared that too often the need for Jesus' touch is overshadowed with custom and habit, rather than a feel of need and communion with our Lord Jesus Christ. The results of such spiritual neglect may be expected, that is: singing of hymns will not come from the heart, prayer will not be effectual, preaching of God's Word will not be eagerly attended. If anything they would be glad if the sermon is rather short that they may run to other pursuits of the flesh. How few may be of the thronging numbers truly desiring the touch of Jesus and to feel the comfort He gives to all who come knowing their need can be met by Him alone. We should not be satisfied to be

merely at our place of worship physically, but more to be in our place of spiritual need. A need of contact and closeness with Jesus. Quite often the spiritual climate of worship and desire for seeking Jesus is set by the pastor. His attitude and manner has an overall effect on the church service. His example of love, humility and a Christ-like spirit will be an encouragement to other members.

It is my opinion that matters of church business or other discussions be dealt with prior to the worship time, that we put aside any and all thoughts that could interfere with our spiritual communion with Jesus.

No doubt the woman of our text had to push and work her way through the crowd to be near Jesus and to touch Him. There are times, some more so than others, when we too may find the way to Jesus is hindered and difficult. We come to church with our minds on worldly cares, our hearts bur-

dened over a problem, perhaps someone has offended our feelings, perhaps a dear friend or loved one is very ill. Our hearts are cumbered about with much care. These are difficult times to keep our minds focused on being blessed and heartily receiving the Word of God. And yet we must do it. We must fight against all odds. We must put forth the effort. Do not allow this most precious time to be wasted. Like the woman in the Scriptures, be resolved, determined, in all your feebleness, lay hold upon Jesus. And you know, more likely than not, when we are so inclined, Jesus will come to us. Jesus knows who reaches out to touch Him. He will not deny those who truly seek Him. Though there be times when we must exercise more faith, pray with more fervency, our reward will be worth it, after all when we hear Him say: "Be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

A CERTAINTY

(Continued from Page 3)

Enoch walked with God: and he was not; for God took him" (Gen. 5:24); and Elijah "And it came to pass, as they [Elijah and Elisha] still went on, and talked, that, behold, there appeared a chariot of fire, and horses of fire, and parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven" (II Kings 2:11). Enoch and Elijah were caught up to heaven alive! The "rapture" or "catching up" of believers, described in verse seventeen, involves both those who have gone to the grave in the Lord Jesus Christ, and those who are living at the time the Lord comes for His elect. (A note: Many believers have the rapture, or catching up, confused with the Second Coming of Christ [the setting foot of Christ once again upon the earth], which is described in the book of Revelation, and in Matthew [Rev. 19:11-16; Matt. 24:29-30]. The rapture shall occur just prior to the beginning of the tribulation [Rev. 3:10], and the Second Coming of Christ at the end of the tribulation). The reason for the rapture is to take the elect, both the dead from the beginning of mankind to the catching up, and the alive at the rapture, from this old wicked world to be with Christ for evermore, and to protect the chosen from the seven years of evil to come. This is the comfort of the believer's hope!

Now, let's consider verse eighteen. Wherefore—therefore—because of this hope, this certainty—comfort one another with these words the certainty of the resurrection is in sharp contrast to the hopelessness of the heathen in the face of death. The Word of God, as given to us by Paul, tells us with certainty that the Day of the Lord shall come just like a thief in the night. No one knows, or has need to know, when the Lord Jesus Christ shall return to meet us in the air (I Thess. 5:1-2). But, know this: A certainty it is that Christ shall return for His called out ones; the shout will be given, the trumpet shall be sounded, and we shall fly to meet Jesus, our Christ in the air, and we shall behold the face of our salvation. We shall soar, along with

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"Satan dreads nothing but prayer. The devil fears nothing from prayerless studies, prayerless work, prayerless religion. He laughs at our toil, mocks at our wisdom, but he trembles when we pray!"

Samuel Chadwick

Dear Brother Helton,

We are hosting our 18th New Years Bible Conference at First Baptist Church, 104 Washington Street, Alexandria, Kentucky on Friday, December 30, 1994 through Sunday, January 1, 1995.

The Friday evening service will begin at 7:00 p.m. Services will be held throughout the day on Saturday. The morning service will be from 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to be followed by lunch served at the church. The afternoon service will be from 1:30 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. to be followed by supper served at the church. The evening service will be from 6:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m. Services on Sunday will begin with the morning service from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to be followed by lunch served at the church. The afternoon service will begin at 1:30 p.m. There will be no Sunday evening service.

Some of the special speakers include Carroll Roberson, Bob Jones, Wayne Mulling, Greg McDaniel, Bob Lamb, Jon Rule, Andy Doherty, Dennis Riddick, James Hobbs, Ron Crisp, Steve Kittle, James Love, Jonathan Gordon, and Bobby Lakes. Special music will be by Carroll Roberson, The Dunaways, The Bluegrass Boys, the Twin Brook Hill Baptist Church Choir, and the Jubilee Choir of First Baptist Church of Alexandria.

There at special motel rates at the Fair Field Inn in Florence, Kentucky (Off I-75, exit 182, Turway Road). All rooms are \$42.00 a night. For reservations, please call 1-600-371-4800.

For more information about the conference, please call 606-635-9029 or 606-635-5923. Thank you.

May God Bless you,

Carl Morton

THE PEARL

(Continued from Page 1)

hope. The pearl, in fact, would never have been found if the merchant man had not sought and found it. There was no way that the pearl could have purchased its own redemption. This fact is stated clearly in the following passage of Scripture.

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost?" (Titus 3:5).

It will be found from many other passages of Scripture that our Lord has always been the seeker rather than man seeking after Him. It, in fact, was true of the woman at the well, the man at the Pool of Bethesda, Paul on the road to Damascus, etc.

Let us now examine the pearl itself and try to glean some truths from our examination. The pearl is a gem that is completely destroyed when its unity is broken. One can divide a piece of gold or silver and not destroy or decrease the value. The same truth applies to the dividing of all other precious metals. One, however, when cutting a pearl into two parts, ends up with absolutely nothing. The two pieces are of no more value than two sticks. The same truth applies to our Lord's pearl—His church. She cannot be divided, since each local church is a unit with Christ as her head. She, according to the Scriptures, is a building fitly framed together into one unit.

Let us now consider another very interesting fact relative to the pearl. It is the fact that the pearl is the product of a living creature. The pearl, in fact, is the only gem which can make this claim. How is it that the pearl is the product of a living creature? The living creature to which I'm making reference, is an oyster that dwells on the floor of the ocean. The side of the oyster, in an effort to heal the wound, gives off a slimy substance which is called "nacre." The nacre gradually covers the wound by layer upon layer until that which we know as a pearl is formed. This fact says to us that the pearl is the result of suffering.

We are to see, then, that the pearl is an excellent example of

our Lord's church, since she also is the product of our suffering Saviour—our suffering Saviour who came and dwelt on the floor which is called "earth." His side was also wounded by way of a spear and from that wounded side He poured out all that He had, that is, He gave His life for the pearl.

The pearl may also be compared to our Lord's church in that the pearl is a thing of great beauty and great price. There, in fact, is no institution upon the face of the earth which can be compared to the beauty and price of our Lord's church. She, after all, has been purchased by the blood of our precious Saviour (1 Pet. 1:18, 19).

The Lord's church can also be likened unto the pearl in that she is out of the sight of the natural man, even as the pearl, when on the ocean floor, is out of the sight of mankind. The natural man, in other words, does not recognize the Lord's true churches. The natural man considers imitation churches to be as genuine as the real church. This fact is set forth in the following passage of Scripture.

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned" (1 Cor. 2:14).

Our Lord's churches can also be likened unto a pearl in that she is taken from the ocean floor and placed on the finger or around the neck of royalty. The church, the Lord's Bride, is to become the Lord's wife. He, in fact, as is pointed out in the following passages of Scripture, is now preparing a place for His Bride so that she can reside with Him.

"Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you. And if I go and prepare a place for you I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also" (John 14:1-3).

"When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory" (Col. 3:4).

It is very important for me to point out that the pearl does not belong to itself, but to the one who has purchased it. The same applies to our Lord's church. He, after all, according to our text and according to the following passages of Scripture, gave Himself

for His church.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it" (Eph. 5:25).

"Who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it" (Matt. 13:46).

"For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's" (1 Cor. 6:20).

We, by examining our Lord's death by way of crucifixion, will understand, in part, why the pearl was of a great price. Death by way of crucifixion has always been the worst kind of execution. Governments have used various other ways to execute criminals, but none can match death by way of crucifixion. Execution, for example, by way of hanging, drowning, burning, sword, axe, electric chair, gas, etc., cannot compare with a crucifixion. The victim, when crucified, was nailed to the rough wood in deep agony. The victim would be held in place by the nails for as long as three days before he expired. The victim was tortured in this manner because he was a specimen of disgraced and degraded humanity. The victim, because he was such, was to be mocked and never pitied. The people, in fact, were to make a spectacle of the event and vent as much torture upon the victim as possible.

Why was God's Son required to pay such a high price? Why was not His execution by way of the sword, or the hanging tree? The answer is found by looking at ourselves. He, after all, was not dying as a result of any sins of His own, but He died for you and me. He died the death that we should have died, because we are worthy of such a death. Death by way of crucifixion, after all, was a symbol of disgrace and wretchedness.

The fact, however, that we assigned to Jesus the worst kind of death, shows that we, by nature, are God haters. It shows that we, in our fallen state, don't want God to rule over our lives.

Death by way of crucifixion also is a revelation of God's marvellous grace in that our God would stoop so low as to give himself to such a death for us. The act of crucifixion relative to the Lord Jesus reveals, as John Newton wrote, God's "Amazing Grace."

Death by way of crucifixion also reveals the requirements of God's righteousness. Death by

crucifixion, in fact, states in a very clear voice that God, by no means, will clear the guilty without the shedding of innocent blood. Death by way of crucifixion declares that God will not wink at our sins. It says that He is not indifferent as to right and wrong, good and evil. It says loud and clear that God will not be satisfied until the uttermost farthing is paid in full. Death by way of crucifixion should say to each of us that there is nothing that we can do which will satisfy God's wrath against us. What do you have to give God for your sins, that would even begin to match the price required of our Lord at Calvary? Could you match such a price by giving ten million dollars to the poor? The answer, of course, is no! The following passage of Scripture explains that there is absolutely nothing that we can do to save ourselves from an eternal hell.

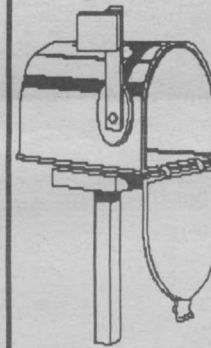
"Not by works of righteous-

ness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5).

It is only by way of our Lord's crucifixion that our sin debt was paid. It was there and there only that peace was made, our debt paid, and the ransom given.

That, however, which I have said has not begun to measure the price paid for the pearl. The greatest price was not the external sufferings of our Lord, but it was His internal sufferings. This part of His suffering was revealed when He said: **"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"** The answer to this question can, in part, be known by looking at the ones for whom He died. He, in other words, was forsaken so that we would never be forsaken. Jesus, in fact, has said: **"I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."**

A Letter to the Editor



The following letter is very typical, in spirit and content, of most of the letters we receive.

Brother Graff has been the source of much encouragement to this pastor and editor, both in his letters and his articles printed in The Baptist Examiner.

His articles are filled with wonderful truth and are written with compassion and concern.

Dear Brother Helton,

Greetings my brother in the name of Christ our Lord. I rejoice in the Lord with you and your people because much has happened in your assembly. Souls added, the paper has turned around, and has much to read that points one to the glory of God.

I like "A Woman's Touch." These articles are needed. Wendy Barkman does a fine job; tell her to keep up the good work for the Lord. Keep up the good work!

In Christian Love,

Edward G. Graff

Edward G. Graff

CHRIST OUR INTERCESSOR, MEDIATOR, AND ADVOCATE

By Pastor Robert Barkman, Gethsemane Missionary Baptist Church, Marengo, Ohio

The Word of the Lord clearly states that Christ performs three different, and yet related ministries on our behalf: (1) His ministry of Intercession, (2) His ministry of Mediation, and (3) His ministry of Advocacy.

Please note the differences between these three ministries of Christ.

(1) When Christ acts as our Intercessor, He meets with the Father on our behalf. We cannot enter into God's presence based upon our own merit. If we are to enter the Father's presence, Christ must stand in our place.

The Scriptures teach us in many different ways that Christ brings us into the Father's presence:

A. Christ gives us God's words
Deut. 18:18 "I will raise them up a Prophet from among their brethren, like unto thee, and will put my words in his mouth; and he shall speak unto them all that I shall command him."

B. Christ does God's works
John 17:4 "I have glorified thee on the earth: I have finished the work which thou gavest me to do."

C. Christ is One with God
John 10:30 "I and my Father are one."

(2) When Christ acts as our Mediator, He meets with the Father on our behalf and the purpose of this meeting is to make peace between us and the Father. In other words, mediation is a special type of intercession. Mediation is intercession made to bring about peace between two parties. Once again, the Scriptures plainly declare Christ's actions that bring about peace with God for us.

A. Christ's death brings us salvation

Isaiah 53:10-12 "Yet it pleased the Lord to bruise him; he hath put him to grief: when thou shalt make his soul an offering for sin, he shall see his seed, he shall prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. He shall see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied: by his knowledge shall my righteous servant justify many; for he shall bear their iniquities. Therefore will I divide him a portion with the great, and he shall divide the spoil with the strong; because he hath poured out his soul unto

death: and he was numbered with the transgressors; and he bare the sin of many, and made intercession for the transgressors."

B. Christ's prayers for His people

John 17:8-11 "For I have given unto them the words which thou gavest me; and they have received them, and have known surely that I came out from thee, and they have believed that thou didst send me. I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine. And all mine are thine, and thine are mine; and I am glorified in them. And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

C. Christ's death fulfills the new covenant

Hebrews 9:11-15 "But Christ being come an high priest of good things to come, by a greater and more perfect tabernacle, not made with hands, that is to say, not of this building; Neither by the blood of goats and calves, but by his own blood he entered in once into the holy place, having obtained eternal redemption for us. For if the blood of bulls and of goats, and the ashes of an heifer sprinkling the unclean, sanctifieth to the purifying of the flesh: How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? And for this cause he is the mediator of the new testament, that by means of death, for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first testament, they which are called might receive the promise of eternal inheritance."

(3) When Christ acts as our Advocate, He meets with the Father on our behalf; the purpose of this meeting is to make peace; and He does this by making an argument on our behalf. Here we find that advocacy is a special type of mediation. Advocacy is mediation that is performed by pleading a case (making an argu-

ment). As in both intercession and mediation, the Scriptures show us clearly the work of Christ as our Advocate.

A. The Security of Believers

John 17:11 "And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name those whom thou hast given me, that they may be one, as we are."

Romans 8:34 "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us."

B. Believers access to God based on Christ's work in whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of Him.

C. The Continual forgiveness of Believers

I John 2:1-2 "My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world."

D. The Sustaining grace given to Believers

Luke 22:31-32 "And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

To summarize our study, we must keep in mind our great need of Christ. Without Christ as our Intercessor, Mediator, and Advocate we cannot have peace with the Father, we cannot enter into His presence, nor can we make any plea on our behalf. It is only through the shed blood of Christ and His active participation in our lives (as Intercessor, Mediator, and Advocate) that we can have a personal relation with the Father. If you desire a relationship with God, if you see that you are separated from God because of the sin that is in your life, look to Christ with a heart of faith. He is the only One who can bring you into the Father's presence. As Christ Himself said "No man can come unto the Father, but by me."

A Woman's Touch

By Wendy Barkman



Widows (Part One)

"A father of the fatherless, and a judge of the widows, is God in his holy habitation" (Psalm 68:5). "The Lord preserveth the strangers; he releiveth the fatherless and widow: but the way of the wicked he turneth upside down" (Psalm 146:9). Our Lord protects and defends the widow. "Honour widows that are widows indeed. But if any widow have children...let them first learn to shew piety at home, and to requite their parents: for that is good and acceptable before God" (I Timothy 5:3-4). "If any man or woman that believeth have widows, let them relieve them, and let not the church be charged; that it may relieve them that are widows indeed" (I Timothy 5:16). We are commanded to take care of our widows. "Pure religion and undefiled before God and the father is this, To visit the fatherless and widows in their affliction, and to keep himself unspotted from the world" (James 1:27). The very essence of one's faith is seen in that person's willingness to comfort and aid the widow in her distress, in her grief.

Tamar (Gen. 38:1-30; Ruth 4:12; I Chron. 2:4; Matt. 1:3) - "Remain a widow at thy father's house." Widowed twice, having been the wife of Judah's oldest son Er, then marrying Onan, Judah's second son, her husband's brother, who also died and left her a widow for the second time, Tamar was now anxiously anticipating the day when she would marry Judah's third son Shelah. Tamar grew tired and weary of waiting, deceived her father-in-law Judah by pretending to be a prostitute, found herself to be pregnant by her own father-in-law, and gave birth to twin sons Pharez and Zarah. Through her son Pharez, Tamar was given a privileged position in the family of David and of our Lord. We should not doubt concerning Tamar's sin, but we ought to marvel at His grace.

Naomi (Ruth 1:1-4:22) **Ruth** (Ruth 1:1-4:22; Matt. 1:5) **Orpah** (Ruth 1:1-15) - "And Elimelech

Naomi's husband died; and she was left, and her two sons." They were from Bethlehem Judah, but they were living in the land of Moab, because of famine back home. And now Elimelech was dead. Left alone, with her two sons, in a strange land, among heathen people, Naomi must have felt as lost and misplaced as any one human being could possibly feel. And now her sons, Mahlon and Chilion, had each chosen one of these heathen women to be his wife. Mahlon married the Moabitess named Ruth. The name of Chilion's Moabite wife was Orpah. "And Mahlon and Chilion died also both of them." Now Mahlon and Chilion died, leaving their mother and their wives alone. Naomi and Ruth would return to Bethlehem, receive abundant blessings from the Lord, which would include, for Ruth, a new husband, a baby boy, and a privileged position in the family of David and of our Lord. Orpah would return to her family, her gods, living out the rest of her life in obscurity.

Phinehas' Wife (I Sam. 4:19-22) - "And his daughter-in-law, Phinehas' wife, was with child...and when she heard...that the ark of God was taken, and that her father-in-law and her husband were dead, she bowed herself and travailed; for her pains came upon her." The Philistines had stolen the ark and killed her husband. Her father-in-law Eli was dead. The shock of it all caused this woman to begin her labor pains, giving birth to a son, and with her dying breath, she named her baby boy Ichabod ("inglorious"). "And she said, The glory is departed from Israel."

Abigail, the Carmelitess (I Sam. 25, 27:3, 30:5, 18; II Sam. 2:2, 3:3; I Chron. 3:1) - Now Abigail "was a woman of good understanding, and of a beautiful countenance." According to the Hebrew language, to be "of good understanding" meant that one was intelligent, acted wisely (in a

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A CERTAINTY

(Continued from Page 1)

those, by the power of God, who have defeated the grave, on the winds of the Holy Spirit to meet God, the Son, in the air. What a certainty—what a hope—what a blessing! Rest in the hope that God has given.

BIBLE STUDY

(Continued from Page 3)

his life. In the end he lost his family, and all that he possessed. Abraham's life, on the other hand, was quite different, God became more and more real to him. We can be sure that he never regretted putting God first in his life. It is always true that Christians will experience blessings from God in proportion to their faithfulness to Him. The apostle John told us that **"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"** (I John 1:7).

FORUM

(Continued from Page 4)

EVERMAN

What washes away our sins? **"The blood of Jesus Christ, his Son cleanses us from all sin."** What is a picture of that cleansing? **"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us."** Baptism is a picture of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. Our baptism pictures our death to sin and our resurrection to a new life. **"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism unto 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. 6:4).

HOBBS

When we are buried in the water and raised again we are picturing what Jesus Christ did for us. He died as our substitute and rose victorious for our justification. When we go into the water we are picturing that Jesus died for us and as He is alive, so are we. The water at the same time pictures the fact that we are thoroughly washed in the blood of Jesus.

Remember only saved people can be baptized. No unsaved

person has ever been baptized. They may have gone under the water but they were not baptized. Since it is true their sins were already washed in the blood of Jesus then baptism is a symbol of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus and of the blood washed sinner.

LENEGAR

What does the phrase **"wash away your sins"** then teach. Does water baptism bring salvation and cleansing for our sins? No, only the work of Christ and the application of that work by the Holy Spirit can bring salvation to an individual. We believe that because Paul was already cleansed spiritually that these words are referring to the symbolism of baptism. Baptism is a picture, a symbol of God's inner working of washing away sin. I Peter 3:21 says, **"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."** Baptism is an outward work, a symbol of what God has done for us. It is an outward sign, a proclamation of what God has done in us and for us. It is not necessary to salvation.

WHITT

from heaven and he fell to the earth. We can see from this account, how salvation works in the lives of all true believers; one minute we are lost, the next minute or instant, we are gloriously saved by the grace of God.

Some Bible scholars view the verse in question as relating to this time of transition taking place; the process of change from the Mosaic law to the new law of grace initiated by Jesus Christ. In Acts 22:12, Ananias is said to be a devout man according to the law. The baptism he may have been referring to was purification and cleansing by water which was practiced under the law (see Num. 19:17-22). This verse must not be construed to indicate that water baptism has any saving merit in any way. This is a verse, like many others, that must be compared (rightly divided) with other Scripture on the subject.

Acts 10 reveals how salvation and baptism come about in their proper order as we read of Cornelius and the assembly gathered at Caesarea. Note verse 43, Peter had been preaching to this assem-

bly, he said: **"To Him [Jesus] give all the prophets witness, that through His name whosoever believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins."** Then He says in verse 47: **"Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we?"** Thus we see that salvation is totally complete, only then can one be properly baptized. Baptism does not cleanse from sin, it is a testimony that our sins have already been cleansed by the blood of Jesus Christ.

*Walk a little plainer
Daddy, said a little
boy so frail. I'm
following in your
footsteps and I don't
want to fail.
Sometimes your steps
are very plain,
sometimes they're hard
to see so walk a little
plainer Daddy for you
are leading me. I
know that once you
walked this way,
many years ago, and
what you did along
the way, I'd really like
to know. For
sometimes I am
tempted and I don't
know what to do, so
walk a little plainer
Daddy for I must
follow you. Someday
when I am grown up,
for you are like what I
want to be, then I'll
have a little boy who'll
want to follow me.
And I would want to
lead him right and help
him to be true, so walk
a little plainer Daddy
for I must follow you.*



A WOMAN'S

(Continued from Page 7)

wise manner). Abigail's wicked husband Nabal had acted in a very rude manner toward David and his men, refusing to help them, when they had peacefully come to him. David was angry and set out to kill Nabal and those of Nabal's household (any male living in his house [servants, sons, nephews, etc.]). Abigail, hearing what had happened, met David with an abundance of food for David and his men. Abigail's humble plea for mercy and forgiveness touched and melted David's bitter, angry heart. Because of Abigail's wise actions, David no longer sought revenge against Nabal. Approximately ten days later, Nabal died, after having suffered a heart attack, leaving Abigail a widow. The Lord had dealt with the wicked Nabal in His own time, in His own way. David sent for Abigail to become his wife. **"David also took Ahinoam of Jezreel; and they were also both of them his wives."** We constantly find these two wives of David, Abigail and Ahinoam, mentioned together. David, Abigail, and Ahinoam, lived at Gath, a city of the Philistines. At one time these wives of David were taken captive by the Amalekites, but David rescued them. They lived with David in the city of Hebron, a city of Judah, where David was made king over Judah. Abigail gave birth to one of David's many sons Chileab (Daniel).

Bathsheba (II Sam. 11:1-27, 12:24-25; I Kings 1:11-31, 2:13-22; I Chron. 3:5; Matt. 1:6) - The sins of adultery and murder brought much heartache into the life of King David. The beautiful Bathsheba, the wife of Uriah, played a starring role in this dramatic episode of David's life. Now Uriah the Hittite (a descendant of some of the earlier inhabi-

tants of the land of Canaan, the Hittites) was one of the valiant men of David's army, a military hero, loyal and faithful to his king and to his country. And now, Bathsheba, Uriah's beautiful wife, and David, the king Uriah served with such bravery, found themselves in a state of panic and fear. The panic came with the knowledge that Bathsheba was pregnant with David's child. And what fear filled their hearts, when they realized that others might find out. King David failed miserably in his attempt to get Uriah to go home to Bathsheba. If Uriah could spend just one night with Bathsheba, all would assume the child was his. Uriah, however, being of such honorable and noble character, would not, and did not, at such a time as this (battles, soldiers living in tents) seek to satisfy his fleshly desires. Adultery and deceit! What next? David began planning Uriah's murder. It would be easy. Just position Uriah in front of the fiercest battle, the most dangerous position possible, to ensure that Uriah would be killed. Who would know the difference? Uriah died in battle, just as David had planned. After Bathsheba had mourned properly for her husband, she became David's wife. Who knew the difference? **"But the thing that David had done displeased the Lord."** We read of David's repentance (Psalm 51) and of the death of the son born to David and Bathsheba. But we also read of His great grace, for David and Bathsheba had four other sons together (Shimea [Shammua], Shobab, Nathan, and Solomon). Bathsheba was given a very privileged position in the family of our Lord, for through her son Nathan was born Mary the mother of our Lord (Luke 3:31). Through her son Solomon was born **"Joseph the husband of Mary, of whom was born Jesus, who is called Christ"** (Matt. 1:6, 16).



NOTICE:
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THE BAPTIST EXAMINER
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