

And if the bugler doesn't sound a clear sound, how will the soldiers know they are being called to battle? 1st Corinthians 14:8 NLV

First Love Ministries, Inc.

PRAYER STUDY #144

Water Baptism

Do you know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? We were buried therefore with Him by baptism in to death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with Him in a death like His, we shall certainly be united with Him in a resurrection like His. Romans 6:3-5

In First Love Ministries, we believe in Credobaptism, which means Believer's Only Baptism. Baptism is an outward and visible sign of an inner work in a person's life of being truly born again by faith in Christ Jesus. We go through Baptism, first of all, to tell the world that we are a believer in Jesus; secondly, to remind ourselves that we have been spiritually dead in trespasses and sins but now are spiritually alive only because of Jesus and His giving of His life for us that we might live; and finally, we go through Baptism to follow the Lord's own example as He was baptized by John the Baptist and to obey the scriptures.

I remind you today that *ALL* people have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. All are in need of a savior, and there is *ONLY ONE* savior, JESUS CHRIST. He is the only way to heaven. Any religion or set of beliefs that contradicts this is false.

In 1970 someone wrote a song that became very popular in the United States. This song has been forgotten by most, but it is just as true now as it was then:

Old Buddha

*Well, old Buddha was a man,
And I'm sure that he meant well.
But I pray for his disciples, lest they wind up in hell.
And I'm sure that old Muhammad thought he knew the way,
But it won't be Hare Krishna we stand before on the Judgment Day.*

*Now I don't hate anybody, so please don't take me wrong.
But there really is a message in this simple song.
You see, there's only ONE WAY-JESUS, if Eternal Life is your goal,*

And meditation of the mind won't save your soul.

*Now you can call yourself a Baptist and not be born again,
A Presbyterian or a Methodist, and still die in your sin.
You can even be Charismatic, shout and dance and jump a pew.
But if you hate your brother, you won't be one of the chosen few.
Cause it won't be a Baptist that's sittin' on the throne,
A Presbyterian or a Methodist that's callin' us home.
It won't even be a Charismatic, that plays that trumpet tune
So let's all just live for Jesus, because He's coming back real soon.*

CHORUS

*No, it won't be old Buddha, who's sitting on the throne,
And it won't be old Muhammad, whose calling us home,
And it won't be Hare Krishna, who plays the trumpet tune,
And we're going to see the Son, not Reverend Moon.*

A Few of Many Scriptures on Water Baptism

Matthew 3:13-16: *Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to John, to be baptized by him. John would have prevented Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by you, and do you come to me?" But Jesus answered him, "Let it be so now; for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he consented. And when Jesus was baptized, he went up immediately from the water, and behold, the heavens were opened, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and alighting on Him, and lo, a voice from heaven, saying: "This is my beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Ephesians 4:4-5: *There is one body and one Spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling: One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in you all.*

1st Peter 3:21: *There is a symbol of baptism, which now saves you also-not the removal of dirt from your body, but the answer of a good conscience toward God; it saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.*

Colossians 2:12: *And you were buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*

John 3:1-5: *Now there was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews. This man came to Jesus by night and said to Him, "Rabbi, we know that You are a teacher come from God; for no one can do these signs that you do, unless God is with him." Jesus answered him, "I tell you the truth, unless one is born anew, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Nicodemus said to Him, "How can a man be born when he is old?" Jesus answered, "I tell you the truth, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God."*

Acts 8:26-40: *And the angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, Get up and go toward the south into the way that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza, which is desert. And he got up and went and behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure and had come to Jerusalem to worship, was returning, and sitting in his chariot reading Isaiah the prophet. And Philip ran up to him and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah and said, Do you understand what you are reading? And he said, How can I, except someone should guide me? And he invited Philip to come up and sit with him. The place of the scripture which he read was this: "He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth. In his humiliation his judgment was taken away and who shall declare his generation? For his life is taken from the earth." And the eunuch answered Philip and said, I ask you, of whom is the prophet speaking? Of himself or of some other man? Then Philip opened his mouth and began at the same scripture and preached to him Jesus. And as they went on their way, they came to some water, and the eunuch said, See here is water; what keeps me from being baptized? And Philip said, If you believe with all your heart, you may, and he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, both Philip and eunuch, and Philip baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of Lord caught away Philip, and the eunuch saw him no more, but he went on his way rejoicing. But Philip was found at Azotus and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea.*

Galatians 3:26-27: *For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.*

Mark 16:15-16: *And He said unto them, Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believes and is baptized shall be saved, and he that disbelieves shall be condemned.*

Titus 3:5: *Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit.*

There are many different teachings on Baptism. There are those who believe that, if a person is not immediately baptized after accepting Christ, they are not true believers. Others believe that candidates should be baptized in the name of Jesus only. Still others believe that those who are not baptized will not inherit eternal life, i.e. that it is a condition of eternal life. Some sprinkle; others dip; and still others insist on water baptism by immersion only, which is our preferred method since it is the form of baptism that Jesus was baptized by John, but we do recognize those sprinkled and dipped. We do not agree with our brothers and sisters who dogmatically teach these various positions, but we certainly don't condemn them either. For us, Baptism is not the experience. It is a symbol of an experience in Christ. In fact, as important as we think water baptism is, we recognize that the thief on the cross, Zaccheaus, the Samaritan Woman at the well, and others were not baptized as far as we know from scripture. Additionally, Jesus did not water baptize or tell anyone else to water baptize any of the people He led to salvation and the born again experience. It is true that He commissioned His disciples at the end of His ministry in Mark 16:15-16 to go into all the world preaching the Gospel and said that those who believed and were baptized would be saved, but those who did not believe would be damned.

Now we are ready for the candidates for baptism. Beloved, I remind you again that Baptism is an outward and visible sign of the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, through which grace we become partakers of His righteousness and heirs of life eternal. Those receiving this sacrament of the church are marked by baptism as Christian disciples and initiated into the fellowship of the Body of Christ. Baptism is a type of burial wherein the believer accepts God's condemnation of himself because of sin, admits that he should have been the one who died at Calvary, and thus should be killed and buried out of sight in a watery grave. Thus, the believer accepts God's diagnosis of his case and proves it by going through this symbolic burial. In Matthew 3:11 baptism symbolizes the burial of the old life. It is administered in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. It is a public profession of faith

in Christ and obligates the believer to live a new life according to the teachings of Jesus.