

BAPTISM AND FELLOWSHIP

S. R. 1 Cor. 1:4 – 9

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Background: Why Be Baptized?

- 1 - Christ commanded it - Matthew 28:19 -20
- 2 - Believers are baptized to be saved - Mark 16:16
- 3 - Those who repent are baptized to receive remission of sins- Acts 2:38
- 4 - Holy Spirit through Peter commanded baptism - Acts 10:48
- 5 - To have sins washed away - Acts 22:16
- 6 - To get into Christ - Eph. 1:3, 7; Romans 6:3 - 5
- 7 - To put on Christ - Galatians 3:26 - 27
- 8 - 2 Tim. 1:9 – 10; Titus 3:3 – 7 God saved us “washing of regeneration” (cf. Jn.3:3-5)
- 9 - Baptism saves - 1 Peter 3:21

Babies and infants are pure and sinless (Eccl. 7:29 “made upright”) and can’t believe or repent, therefore they are not to be baptized. Baptism is for: (cf. Acts 8:12) “men and women”

Intro.

- A. Virtually all Protestant denominations refer to themselves as a part of the “church of Christ” (meaning the universal body of Christ) much the same way we do.
 1. They claim to accept the one body, Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, and God of (Eph. 4:4-6), yet they exclude “one baptism.”
 2. On that point of doctrine *believers* (those claiming allegiance to Christ) are “all over the board.”
- B. The Point: One’s view of baptism significantly affects one’s view of fellowship.
 1. The more narrow your view of baptism, the more narrow your view of the bounds of fellowship.
 2. An exclusive view of baptism produces an exclusive view of fellowship.
- C. Priorities:
 1. If our top priority is doctrinal purity, fellowship is considerably limited.
 2. If our priority is unity with all those who believe in Jesus, the act of Christian birth is viewed as broadly as possible to permit fellowship with a greater number of people.

I. FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD REQUIRES ONE TO BE “IN CHRIST.”

A. Every spiritual blessing is “in Christ.” (Eph.1:3-14) Note “in Him” (cf. vs.7, 13).

1. Christ provides the access to the Father (Jn. 10:9; 14:6)
2. Belief leads to obedience (John 8:24; Heb. 5:9; Acts 16:30-34)
3. Baptism puts one “in Christ.” (Gal. 3:26-27)

B. God calls us into fellowship with His Son (1 Cor. 1:9 – 17)

1. Crucifixion of self and baptism into Christ (vs. 13) are both essential ingredients for me to be “in Christ.”

2. The emphasis is not upon who baptized you, but into whom were you baptized (cf. Acts 4:12).

C. Fellowship with others is dependent upon having a common Father.

1. Read (1 John 1:3-4; 2:3-4; 5:11-12) Relationship with the Father is through the Son.
2. Only those who have been buried with Christ in baptism enjoy the promise of “having forgiven us all our transgressions.” (Col. 2:12-13).
3. We become a part of God’s house through obedience to the Son (Mark 16:16; Heb. 3:6, 14; **1 Peter 1:19-25**).

II. THE FUNDAMENTAL QUESTION IS: AM I IN CHRIST?

A. Baptism places one “in Christ” (Romans 6:3 – 6)

1. Baptism is the believers wedding ceremony with Christ (1 Peter 3:21).
2. The question is: Are we in Christ; united with Christ? This determines our fellowship with Christ and with His people?

B. **Fallacious View** of God’s “Fellow – ship.” Response to: In the Grip of Grace, Max Lucado

1. “When I meet a man whose faith is in the cross and whose eyes are on the Savior, I meet a brother.”
3. Response: “A brother who is not yet born again? (John 3:5)
 - a. A brother who is not yet a son? (Gal.3:26 – 27)
 - b. A brother who is not yet saved? (Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21)
 - c. A brother who is not yet united with Christ? (Romans 6:5)

C. **Heart Tugs for Fellowship.**

1. Our emotional struggle is for all the spiritually-minded, God seeking people around us who haven’t been biblically baptized.

D. **Is grace and faith enough?** “If he or she has faith in Jesus and is empowered by God, grace says that’s enough.” In the Grip of Grace (p. 168)

1. What about faith-filled Cornelius who still needed to be saved? (Acts 10)
2. Or the sincere Ethiopian truth-seeker who still needed to be baptized? (Acts 8)

III. THE KEY TO UNITY IN CHRIST

A. Our tolerance and acceptance does not determine who is or is not a child of God.

1. “If it would be wrong for us to impose baptism when God hasn’t, is it any less wrong for us *not* to insist on baptism when God has?”

Conclusion: What Jesus says (John 8:24; Jn. 14:6; Mk. 16:16)

- Christ is the captain of the ship.
- It is not our place to tell others they can ignore His orders.
- We don’t make the rules, but we must obey them.
- We help folks by sharing with them the Lord’s requirements in order to have fellowship with Him.