

ONE BAPTISM

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INTRODUCTION

KINDS OF BAPTISM TAUGHT IN SCRIPTURE (Heb. 1:2)

1. Baptism in the Holy Spirit (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:33; Acts 1:5; 11:16).
2. Baptism in fire (Matt. 3:11-12; Luke 3:16-17)
3. Baptism of suffering (Matt. 20:22-23; Luke 12:50)
4. Baptism in water--
 - a. Unto repentance (John's baptism --Mark 1:5, 9; Acts 19:3-4)
 - b. Into Christ (Commanded by Jesus --Matt. 28:19; Acts 19:5)

ONE BAPTISM

The Bible says there is “one baptism” (Eph. 4:5).

That baptism is the one that unites in one body, the church (Eph. 4:1-16; 1Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:27; Rom. 6:3; Ac. 2:41).

It is the one we are to “obey” to receive remission of sins and the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19; Ac. 2:38; 16:33; 22:16; 8:12; 10:48; Rom. 6:17)

It is the one that requires water (Eph. 5:26; Ac. 8:36-39; 10:47; 16:13-15; Heb. 10:22; Jn3:5; 1Jn. 5:6, 8).

QUESTION: Why does Hebrews 6:2 speak of “baptisms” (plural)?

ANSWER:

The answer to that has been of some question.

The “teaching of baptisms” may refer to the many washings done under the Old Testament (Heb. 9:10; Exodus 29:4; Lev. 14:8-9; 17:15-16; 22:6; Deut. 21:6; 23:11). After the initial spurt of growth of the church among the Jews many had begun to slip back to Judaism (Heb. 2:1-3; 4:1; 5:11-14; 6:1-6). The theme of Hebrews is, “better” things in Christ (Heb. 6:9; 7:7, 19, 22; 8:6; 9:23; 10:34; 11:16, 35, 40; 12:24).

If it is referring to baptisms under the New Covenant, it may have reference to knowledge of the different baptisms --not that we must have received more than one. Ephesians 4:5 plainly says there is one--obviously referring to that which brings us into the one body, the basis of our unity in Christ.

PART I. CHRISTIAN BAPTISM IS IMMERSION IN WATER

A. The Scriptures clearly indicate water consistent with immersion.

Matt. 3:6. John *baptized* **IN** [Greek, “en”] *the Jordan*.

Matt. 3:16. Jesus *went up* **from** [“apo”] *the water*.

Mark 1:5. John *baptized* **IN** ["en"] *the river Jordan*.

Mark 1:9. Jesus was *baptized of John* **IN** ["eis" --"into"] *the Jordan*.

Mark 1:10. Jesus came **from** ["apo"] *the water*.

John 3:23. John baptized *in Aenon because there was* **MUCH** *water*. (Note: the Greek says "many waters." That is consistent with immersion, though not necessarily requiring it.)

Acts 8:36. They came **TO** *a certain water*.

Acts 8:38. Both Philip and the Eunuch went down **INTO** ["eis"] *the water and he baptized him*.

Acts 8:39. They came up **OUT OF** ["ek"] *the water*.

Acts 16:13, 15. Lydia was baptized at a "**RIVER**".

Acts 16:32-33. The Jailer had to take Paul and Silas **out** to be baptized.

Acts 22:16. *Arise and be baptized* (It was necessary to get to the water. --not necessary if it had been sprinkling)

1Cor. 10:2 "*Baptized into Moses* **IN** ["en"] *the cloud and* **IN** ["en"] *the sea.*"

Heb. 10:22. "...body **WASHED**¹ with [dative case] *pure water*..."

1Pe. 3:20-21 Noah's family saved **through** or by ["dia"] water of the flood, *which after a true likeness baptism does now save us*.

Eph. 5:26. "*Cleansed by the* **WASHING** [2067 lutron] *of water with the word.*"

B. The Scriptures picture baptism as a burial and resurrection

Rom. 6:4. "...**BURIED** in baptism..."

Rom. 6:5. "...**LIKENESS** of his death..."

Col. 2:12 "...**BURIED** with him in baptism..."

Col. 2:12 "...**RAISED** with him"

Col. 3:1 "...**RAISED** together with Christ..."

Only immersion pictures a burial and resurrection. It was in likeness of Christ's death. One is not "*buried*" by sprinkling a little dirt on the casket.

Jesus was put into the tomb, the door was sealed, and he later came forth. Similarly, we are immersed in water and raised.

C. "Baptize" is a Greek word. The Greeks have always understood it to mean to be immersed.

To this very day the Greek churches immerse even infants.

The word was used in literature of New Testament times with reference to things being dipped or sunk [as a ship].

(See Thayer, p. 907 Baptizo, I. 1. "properly to dip repeatedly, to immerge, submerge, (of vessels sunk, see Polyb. 1, 51, 6; 8, 8, 4; of animals, Diod. I, 36).

¹ Strong: 3068 louo (loo'-o);

A primary verb; to bathe (the whole person);

whereas #3538 ["nipto"] means to wet a part only,

and #4150 ["pluno"] to wash, cleanse garments exclusively):

D. The word, “baptizo” means “dip,” “immerse,” “plunge,” or “whelmed,” as attested by the overwhelming mass of Greek Lexicons.

--Strong's Concordance Lexicon: 907 Baptizo; from a derivative. of 911; to *make whelmed* (i.e. *fully wet*)

--Thayer's Lexicon: “...an immersion in water”

E. The root from which baptize comes is “bap,” meaning to, “dip,” so used in its several forms

#911 = “bapto”

Luke 16:24. *send Lazarus, that he may dip [#911 “bapto”] the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue;*

John 13:26. *Jesus therefore answers, He it is, for whom I shall dip [#911 “bapto”] the sop, and give it him. So when he had dipped [#1686 embapto] the sop, he takes and gives it to Judas,.*

Rev 19:13 *He is clad in a robe dipped [911 “bapto] in blood, and the name by which he is called is The Word of God.*

OBJECTION: Some translations say, “sprinkled with blood.”

ANSWER:

The reason for that is that various Greek manuscripts have different readings. If the Greek is “*bapto*” it is always translated “dipped.”

#909 - “baptismos”

Mark 7:4. *and [when they come] from the market-place, except they bathe [907 “baptizo”] themselves, they eat not; and many other things there are, which they have received to hold, washings [#909 - “baptismos’] of cups, and pots, and brazen vessels.*

Heb. 6:2. *of the teaching of baptisms, and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead,*

Heb. 9:10. *[being] only [with meats and drinks and divers washings] carnal ordinances,*

#1686 = “embapto”

Matt. 26:23. *And he answered and said, He that dipped his hand with me in the dish, the same shall betray me.*

Mark 14:20. *And he said unto them, [It is] one of the twelve, he that dips with me in the dish.*

John 13:26. *Jesus therefore answers, He it is, for whom I shall dip the sop, and give it him. So when he had dipped the sop, he takes and gives it to Judas, (the son) of Simon Iscariot.*

F. The LXX (Septuagint translation of the Old Testament into Greek) used baptizo to translate the Hebrew word, “tabal” (2881) which means “dip.” Naaman “dipped” himself seven times in the Jordan (2Kings 5:14)

G. The Greek words, “rantizo” (#4472 “sprinkle”) and “ekcheo” (#1632 “pour”), are never used of water baptism.

In Heb. 10:22, “rantizo” is contrasted to “luo” which is sometimes used for baptize. It says that our *hearts are SPRINKLED [#4472 “rantizo”] [with blood --Heb. 9:13, 14] and our bodies are WASHED [#3068 “luo”] with pure water.* This was washing of the body, not merely put upon the head.

OBJECTION: Holy Spirit baptism is spoken of as the Spirit being “poured out” (Acts 2:17, 18; 10:45).

ANSWER:

When Jesus was “baptized in the river Jordan” (Mark 1:9) he was not “poured out.” Baptism was what was done to a person “in” a river.

One can be baptized in different things. Some were immersed “in the Spirit” (John 1:33). The Israelites were immersed in the cloud and the sea (1Cor. 10:2). Only if the quantity is sufficient to immerse was it said they were “baptized.”

OBJECTION: In Mark 7:4 the word, “baptizo” in some ancient manuscripts is “sprinkle.” The two words must mean much the same thing.

ANSWER:

We do not know how this scribal error occurred. The supposition is too speculative to carry any weight. Certainly the Greek words are entirely different.

OBJECTION: In Mark 7:4 “Baptizo” is also used to describe “washing” of things such as cups and beds (Mark 7:4). It is unlikely that beds would be immersed.

ANSWER:

The Greek word, “beds” textually questionable.

However, in Jewish tradition they did immerse beds. Their “beds” were often no more than mats that could be taken up (Mark 2:9-12).

Rabbi Maimonides said, *“A bed that is wholly defiled, if he dip it part by part, is pure. If he dip the bed in a pool, although its feet are plunged in the thick clay of the bottom, it is clean.”*

Under the Old Testament the Jews did immerse or wash themselves completely (Lev. 15:16).

Again, Rabbi Maimonides says, *“Wherever, in the law, washing of the flesh or clothes is mentioned, it means nothing else than dipping the whole body in a laver; for if a man dips himself all over except the tips of his little finger, he is still in his uncleanness.”* --The Gospel Plan of Salvation, by Brents p. 291

The fact that old manuscripts differ on whether the text should be baptizo or rantizo does not indicate they are interchangeable. Certainly we can not reasonably translate Mark 1:9 as, “he sprinkled him into [Greek “eis”] the Jordan.”

H. The most ancient baptisteries were the size for immersion.

Encyclopedia. Britannica, 1956, Vol. 3, p. 86, “Baptistry”:

“The earliest baptistry extant is probably that of the Lateran palace in Rome, which dates largely from the time of Constantine. Octagonal in shape, this baptistry consists of a central area in which was the large octagonal basin or pool called a font....Following this tradition, baptisteries, throughout the early Church, were separate buildings, circular or polygonal in plan, up to the 9th or 10th century. When the change from immersion to sprinkling as the method of baptism rendered large baptisteries unnecessary, the baptistry became a mere chapel with a church or even disappeared entirely, the font being placed at any convenient spot. Many baptisteries of the earlier type, especially in Italy, are of great size and richly decorated. [Florence, Pisa].”

OBJECTION: There would not have been enough water available in Jerusalem to have immersed 3,000 people in one day.

ANSWER:

The pools of Jerusalem had plenty of water and space to easily do the job. The law required much washing and the Jews provided for it. The Pool of Bethesda had five porches (John 5:1-3). The Pool of Siloam (John 9:7), is very large and still in use today. Both of these are specified as places for people washing. Either could easily have provided ample space and water for the job.

OBJECTION: There would not have been enough time to baptize 3,000 by immersion in one day. Sprinkling could have been easily done in mass.

ANSWER:

Baptism takes very little effort or time. Based on how large numbers are usually baptized by several people at the same time, it could have easily been done by the twelve apostles in from two to four hours. Baptism takes less than thirty seconds per person unless one chooses to elaborate on a simple statement of acceptance and baptism. Use your math.

OBJECTION: The Jews would not have permitted them to use the pools.

ANSWER:

That is speculative and without foundation. That kind of opposition to the church had not solidified at this early stage.

I. Many Outstanding Theologians agree that the original mode was immersion.

CALVIN: Founder of the Reformed Church (later called, Presbyterian)

Calvin maintained that the form used was “not of the least consequence” but conceded, “...it is evident that the term baptize means to immerse, and that this was the form used by the primitive Church.” --Institutes, Book IV, Chapter XV, on

Baptism, 19. (see in “Did Jesus Command Immersion?” by Lawson. Also, Ages Digital Library, p. 1465.)

JOHN WESLEY: Founder of the Methodist Church

“We are buried with him--Alluding to the ancient manner of baptizing by immersion.” --Notes on New Testament, Rom. 6:4 (Ages Digital Library, p.462)

“Sat. 21. — Mary Welch, aged eleven days, was baptized according to the custom of the first church, and the rule of the Church of England, by immersion.” --Works of John Wesley, Vol. 1, Extract 1:10, 1735-2/1737_p.15 (Ages Digital Library, p.39)

LUTHER: Founder of the Lutheran Church said,

“Baptism (die taufe) is called in Greek, baptisimos; in Latin, mersio (immersion), that is, when anything is wholly dipped in water (ganz und wasser taucht) which covers it. And although in many places it is no longer the custom to plunge and dip (stossen und tauchen) the children in the font, but they are poured over (begeusst) with the hand, out of the font, according to the import of the word tauf (baptize), the child, or any one who is baptized (getaust wird), is wholly sunk and immersed (sonk und tauft) in water and taken out again; since, without doubt, in the German language, the word tauf (baptize) is derived from the word tief, because what is baptized (taufet) is sunk deep in water. This, also, the import of tauf demands.” --Sermon on Baptism, translated from the critical Latin edition of Jena.

“The Germans call baptism tauff, from depth, which they call tieff in their language, as if it were proper those should be deeply immersed who are baptized. And truly, if you consider what baptism signifies you shall see the same thing required.” Luther’s Works, vol. I, p. 72, Whittenberg, 1582.

Luther's Translation of the Bible into German uses the same word that is used for baptism, *taufte*, for Naaman's *dipping* in Jordan (2Kings 5:14). Luther translates the Hebrew verb *tabal* by the word *dip* (*tauchen*) in the fourteen other places where it occurs.

Reference works listing quotations of theologians:

Did Jesus Command Immersion? -by Lawson, Standard Publishing Co.

Handbook On Baptism -by Shepherd, Gospel Advocate Co.

The Gospel Plan of Salvation -by Brents, Gospel Advocate Co.

OBJECTION: Those who were “baptized” in the Holy Spirit had him “poured” upon them (Ac. 1:5, 8; 2:3, 17, 18).

ANSWER:

The Greek word, #1632 “ekcheo,” means to “pour forth” or “gush.” They were baptized “in” the Holy Spirit (Ac. 1:5). The quantity was sufficient to immerse them. Some suggest that as they were “filled with the Holy Spirit,” their hearts were immersed.

OBJECTION: Isa. 52:15 says he would *SPRINKLE* the nations.

ANSWER:

The marginal note says “*startle.*” It does not say, with water. Our hearts are sprinkled with blood (Heb. 9:13, 14; 10:22; 12:24; 1Pe. 1:2).

OBJECTION: Ezek. 36:25 says, “*I will SPRINKLE clean water upon you.*”

ANSWER:

This is spoken to the Jews (36:24) under the Old Testament, not to Christians. “Clean water” was special water made from ashes of a red heifer (Num. 19:1-9) to be used to ceremonially sprinkle them. This is never called, “baptism.” The passage is a symbolic purification done by God, not by us. (36:24)

OBJECTION: 1Peter 3:20-21 likens the flood to baptism. In the flood, it rained upon them. The picture is sprinkling rather than immersion.”

ANSWER:

The way it rained better pictures immersion. They were enclosed in the ark, as in a coffin, floating on the flood and totally inundated by water falling upon them and rising under and around them. They were totally inundated in the torrent, unlike modern sprinkling or pouring for baptism.

OBJECTION: 1Cor. 10:2 says that those who went out of Egypt were “*all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*” Clouds are made of droplets of water.

ANSWER:

Not so. This is no similarity to sprinkling or pouring. They were immersed “*in the cloud and sea*” (Ex. 14:21-30; 15:2, 8, 10, 19). They were in the midst of the sea. The water became a “*wall*” on both sides. The “*flood stood upright as a heap.*” It says nothing of anything being sprinkled upon them. The sea stood up beside them and the cloud covered them. In this way they were immersed *in the cloud and in the sea.*

J. HISTORY OF SPRINKLING

“Change leads to change. Immersion was the only mode of baptism in the Apostolic Church. No other would have been understood. But when baptism no longer immediately followed conversion, when it was frequently deferred till death was near, immersion in such a case was impossible. When infant baptism became common the necessity for some relaxation of the rule became still more pressing....” “...we are told that...where a bath could not be resorted to it was enough to pour water three times on the head. Here was the first beginning of what were afterwards called clinical baptisms...” --The Growth of the Church, pp. 190, 191 by John Cunningham (Presbyterian)

“Baptism by sprinkling was rejected by the whole ancient Church (except in the rare case of death-beds or extreme necessity) as no baptism at all. Almost the first exception was the heretic Novatian.” --Baptism, in The Nineteenth Cent., Oct., 1879, pp. 697, 698 by Stanley (Church of England).

Note: “clinic” means, “sick.” It was permissible only in necessity. Water was poured copiously to make it as close as possible to immersion. Upon getting well, the individual was to be immersed. This continued even into the reformation period.

Eusebius said,

“...[Novatian] *fell seriously ill and was thought to be about to die. In the bed itself on which he was laying he received grace by water being poured around over him, if it is proper to say that such a one received it... When he believed, he was counted worthy of the office of presbyter by the favor of the bishop who laid his hand on him for this rank. The bishop was opposed by all the clergy and many of the laymen, since it was not lawful for someone who had received pouring in bed on account of sickness to become a member of the clergy, but he asked to be allowed to ordain this one alone.*” (Church History VI. xliii. 14, 17, quoting a letter from Cornelius, bishop of Rome, 251-253)

PART II. THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

A. SCRIPTURES SHOWING THE PURPOSE OF CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

1. SCRIPTURES RELATING TO “WATER” OR “WASH”

-**Heb. 10:22.** “*Having your hearts sprinkled... [with blood --9:13, 14] and your bodies washed [3068 louo] with pure water.*”

-**1Cor. 6:11.** “*ye were washed [628 apolouo] “ (margin: “washed yourselves”--middle voice)*

-**Titus 3:5.** “*...he saved us, through the washing [3067 loutron] of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.*”

-**1Jhn 5:6-8.** “*...not by water only but by water and blood....There are three who bear witness, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood: and the three agree in one.*”

-**Eph. 5:26.** We are *Cleansed by the washing [3067 loutron] of water with the word.*

-**John 3:5.** *Except one is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.* Some deny this is water baptism. Contradictory arguments are made.

OBJECTION: “Water” is figurative. Eph. 5:26 says it is in the word.

ANSWER:

It does not seem likely that God would use a figurative meaning for water in such a conjunction with the literal word, “Spirit.” This is the same error as “Jehovah's Witnesses” make in claiming that in Matthew 28:19, where it is used with “Father” and “son,” “Holy Spirit” is not a person.

“Water” is in 1Jn. 5:6-8 when it says that the “Spirit, water and blood... agree in one, and in Heb. 10:22 where it says our hearts are sprinkled with “blood” and our bodies are washed with pure water.

Eph. 5:26 does not say that “word means water.” “En hreemati” may be translated, “by the word” just as “en machaira” (Matt. 26:52) may be translated, “by the sword.” By the word we learn the gospel (Rom. 10:14-17) and thus “obey from the heart that form of teaching” (Rom. 6:17), being then baptized in water (Ac. 8:38; 10:47). Water is no less water than people are people in John 8:31 when it speaks of continuing “in the word.”

OBJECTION: “Water” means “truth.” James 1:18 says we are “begotten” through the truth.

ANSWER:

The word is truth (Jn. 17:17). Faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God (Rom. 10:17). The word commands baptism in water. It is not a substitution for water.

OBJECTION: “Water,” means “Spirit” (John 7:39).

ANSWER:

The two contexts are not parallel.

“*Born of water*” is not the same as, rivers of living water flowing out of us.

Making “water” mean, “Spirit” makes it say, “born of Spirit and Spirit.” That is unnatural and redundant.

Again, it is not likely that figurative “water” and literal “Spirit” would be used in such a conjunction. While we do find water in some places used figuratively, John, who is careful to clarify figurative terms, fails to indicate any figurative usage here.

Conversely, immediately thereafter (3:32-33) he uses “water” of baptism. John was baptizing in Aenon near to Salem, because there was “much water” there. This is then followed by a comparison between the baptisms of John and Jesus (3:25-26; 4:1-2). In this setting it is unlikely that “water” is figurative. The only reason for making it figurative is that it serves a vested interest in trying to extricate them from their theological difficulty.

OBJECTION: It is speaking of two births. “Water,” is the physical birth as a child.

ANSWER:

The Greek does not support two births. It does not say, “born of the water and born of the Spirit.”

Born	of	water	and	Spirit
genneethe	ex	hudatos	kai	Pneumatatos

Just as Matthew 28:19 indicates one name but three persons, so here we have one birth involving both water and Spirit. 1John 5:6-8 says the water, Spirit and blood

agree in one.

Furthermore, Nicodemus was an old man asking how one can be born “*when he is old?*” Did Jesus answer his question? Did he tell him how to be born again or did he tell him something Nicodemus and every person that ever lived had done (except Adam and Eve—and perhaps those who have dry births)? Why tell Nicodemus he had to be physically born in order to get into the kingdom?

BAPTISM “INTO” CHRIST OR INTO HIS NAME:

-**Matt. 28:18-20.** Commanded to baptize all nations *into* [1519 eis] *the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...*”

-**Acts 8:12, 16.** The Samaritans believed and were baptized “*into* [“eis”] *the name of the Lord Jesus,*” later having the Apostles' hands laid by which the Holy Spirit came upon them.

-**Acts 19:1-5.** Twelve men at Ephesus who had only known the baptism of John, were re-baptized “*into* [Greek: “eis”] *the name of the Lord Jesus,*” followed by hands laid on them to have the Holy Spirit come upon them.
(The baptism of John the Baptist was not Christian baptism)

-**1Cor. 1:13.** Baptism should be *into the name* of Christ.

OBJECTION: Paul said he was not sent to baptize. (1Cor. 1:15, 17)

ANSWER:

Paul's primary commission was to preach the gospel but that did not exclude baptism (Matt. 28:19). He did baptize Crispus and Gaius, but generally left it to others, just as did Jesus (John 4:2).

-**Col. 2:12, 13, 20; 3:1**

2:12. “...*having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead. 13. And you, being dead through your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, you, I say, did he make alive together with him, having forgiven us all our trespasses*”

2: 20. “*ye died with Christ,*”

3:1. “*raised together with Christ.*”

-**Rom. 6:1-22.** “*What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? 2. God forbid, We who died to sin, how shall we any longer live therein? 3. Or are ye ignorant that we who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? 4. We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death that, like as Jesus was raised up from the dead by the glory of the father, you also might walk in newness of life. 5. For if we have become united with him in the likeness of his death*

we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection; 6.knowing this, that our old man was crucified with him that the body of sin might be DONE AWAY, that so we should no longer be in bondage to sin. 7.for he that has died is justified from sin. 8. If we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him.

17.But thanks be to God that whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; 18.and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness. 22.But now being made free from sin and become servants to God, ye have your fruit unto sanctification and the end eternal life.”

OBJECTION: This is Holy Spirit baptism.

ANSWER:

This baptism puts one into Christ and makes them dead to sin. Acts 8:12, 16; 19:5-6 shows they were Christians before the Holy Spirit fell upon them.

This baptism is a burial and resurrection in likeness of Jesus. He was put into a tomb and it was sealed. We are immersed in likeness of that. Baptism in the Holy Spirit pictures no burial.

None of these passages indicate they speak of baptism in the Holy Spirit.

This baptism was obedience to teaching (Rom. 6:17; 2:8; 10:16; Ac. 5:32; 2Thes. 1:8).

The word, “baptize” was commonly used of water baptism without explanation, not of Holy Spirit baptism. The reason is that water baptism was the common baptism taught and practiced. Holy Spirit Baptism was only done by Jesus (Mat. 3:11; Luke 3:16; Acts 11:16).

By the time of the writing of Ephesians, there is one baptism in which all the church is united (Eph. 4:5), not two or three. That was water baptism (Eph. 5:26; Heb. 10:22).

OBJECTION: Christ is what they were baptized in, not water.

ANSWER:

No such baptism was ever identified. The description of it as a burial and resurrection would not fit a figurative baptism. The only need for such an explanation is to evade the obvious teaching of the text.

There can be no question that water baptism continued throughout the New Testament and that the word, “baptize” was so closely identified with it that it was often used without water even needing to be specified. “*There is ONE baptism*” [Eph. 4:5].

-Gal. 3:26-29. “*For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ. 28....all one man in Christ*

Jesus. 29. And if ye are Christ's, then ye are Abraham's seed, heirs according to promise.” cf. 2Cor. 5:17. “If any man is in Christ he is a new creature.” Notice that becoming sons “by faith” is explained as being baptized into Christ. Obviously baptism is not salvation by works.

-1Cor. 12:12-13. *For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of the body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ. 13. For by one Spirit were we all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether bond or free; and were all made to drink of one Spirit.”*

The Spirit provides faith through the word (Rom. 10:17) and regenerates us (John 3:3-5; 1John 5:6-8; Ac. 2:38; Eph. 5:26).

This is not the same as “baptism in the Holy Spirit.” Both the Greek structure here and the purpose are different.

The purpose is to get “into” [eis] the body of Christ”

Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27. “into Christ,” “into his death,” “put on Christ.”
2Cor. 5:17. “If any man is in Christ he is a new creature.”

Nothing is said of one having to be baptized in the Holy Spirit to get into Christ, and clearly there were believers upon whom the Holy Spirit had not yet fallen (Ac. 8:4-18; 19:1-6). This is not Holy Spirit baptism.

It says “we were all baptized into one body...all made to drink of one Spirit.” If this were baptism in the Holy Spirit, every Christian would have to have it. Those without it would not be in the body of Christ.

Baptism “in the Holy Spirit” was promised only to The Apostles (on Pentecost -- Acts 1:4-5; 2:1-14; 11:15; Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; 24:49)

As a sign of equal acceptance of the gentiles, the household of Cornelius received it (Acts 10:44-47; 11:15-17). This baptism was administered by Jesus, not man, and was no longer given by the time of the writing of the Ephesian letter (about 62 AD). (Eph. 4:1-2).

The context indicates the “one” Spirit is the means by which we are baptized into one body. It is the means rather than the element in which we are baptized. The emphasis is on the source of our unity in Christ.

The Greek structure in 1Cor. 12:13 confirms this. It is clearly different than in Holy Spirit baptism.

1Cor. 12:13. By one Spirit we were all baptized into one body

en	eni	pneumati	heemeis	pantes	eis	en	soma	ebaptistheemen
by	one	Spirit	we	all	into	one	body	were baptized

Compare this with the following passages on Holy Spirit Baptism:

Matt. 3:1.

Autos	humas	baptisei	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
he	you	shall baptize	in	Spirit	Holy

Luke 3:16.

autou Autos	humas	baptisei	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
He	you	shall baptize	in	Ghost	Holy

John 1:33

houtos	estin	ho	baptizoon	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
the same	is	he which	baptizes	in	Spirit	holy

Acts 11:16

	humeis	de	baptistheesesthe	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
	ye	but	shall be baptized	in	Ghost	Holy

Mark: 1:8.

	autos	de	baptisei	humas	en	Pneumati	Hagioo
	he	but	shall baptize	you	in	Spirit	Holy

Acts 1:5

de	en	Pneumati	baptistheesesthe			Hagioo
but	with	Spirit	shall be baptized			Holy

OBJECTION: It says they were *baptized in* [“en”] *the Spirit*.

ANSWER:

The preposition, “en” has a wide variety of usage. In 1Co. 12:13 the Spirit is the means (cf. Matt. 26:52). We hear the word of the Spirit and are helped to understand, resulting in our being baptized into Christ in water. In Holy Spirit baptism Jesus baptized them in the Holy Spirit.

SCRIPTURES CONNECTING BAPTISM WITH SALVATION

Mark 16:16. “He that believes and is baptized shall be saved...”

OBJECTION: It does not say, “...he that is not baptized shall be damned.”

Condemnation comes from omitting faith, not baptism.

ANSWER:

The focus is on how to get saved, not lost. It says, “*he that believes and is baptized will be saved*”

It does not say, “He that believes and is saved, should be baptized.” Baptism was not specified in the second clause because it would have been awkward and unnecessary. It is the law of conservation of speech.

For example, when the law tells military conscripts, “If you go and fight for your country you will be rewarded but if you do not go, you will be imprisoned,” it does not mean you must go but you do not need to fight?

The very fact that God so often relates becoming a Christian with baptism suggests that is what takes place in baptism.

OBJECTION: The last sixteen verses of Mark are not in the most ancient manuscripts and therefore uninspired. Some manuscripts end differently.

ANSWER:

Other passages on baptism establish the same truth, however, it is a fact that these verses are found in some very ancient manuscripts, and though missing from others there is usually a place left for them. Certainly, without these verses the book lacks an ending and these verses have more in their favor than any others.

OBJECTION: The thief on the cross was not baptized, yet Jesus told him he would be in paradise.

ANSWER:

First, Jesus can forgive anyone he wishes. However, those who hear his word must do what he says. Exceptions do not change the rules.

Secondly, the thief lived under the Old Testament rather than the new. The New Testament (or Covenant) was not in force until after Christ died. “*A testament is of force where there has been death: for it does never avail while he that made it lives*” (Heb. 9:16, 17).

It was only after Christ died that people could be “*baptized into his death*” (Rom. 6:3). After that, even those baptized by John were re-baptized (Ac. 19).

1Cor. 10:1, 2, 6, 11. Those who came out of Egypt (a picture of bondage in sin) were freed by being “*baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*”

Ex. 14:13. God cared and began freeing them while still in Egypt. At the sea, Moses said, “*Stand still and see the salvation of Jehovah.*”

Ex. 14:15. God said, “*Why do you cry unto me? Speak unto the children of Israel, that they go forward.*”

Ex. 14:30. *Thus the LORD saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians;*

Only when they obeyed God and passed through the sea were they said to be “saved” (Ex. 14:30; 15:2).

Thus, the bondage to sin is typified in the Egyptians being washed away in the sea (cf. 15:10, 19).

1Cor. 10:6, 11. *“These things were written for our learning”*

The point in 1Cor. 10 is that while they were baptized into Moses (as we are baptized, into Christ), ate manna and drank water (as we eat and drink of Christ and participate in the Lord's Supper together), they fell in the wilderness (a type of our Christian journey) and failed to enter the promised land (a picture of heaven). *“Let him that thinks he stands take heed lest he fall.”* (1Cor. 10:12 cf. 9:27)

1Pet. 3:20, 21. *“Eight souls were saved by water, the like figure wherein baptism also now saves you...”*

OBJECTION: The baptism that now saves you is only a “figure”--not water baptism.

ANSWER:

The passage presents salvation through water in the flood as a “figure” of our being saved through baptism. That water was real. Likewise the baptism connected with salvation is with water (Heb. 10:22; Eph. 5:26; John 3:5; 1John 5:6-8; Acts 8:36-39; 10:47).

OBJECTION: Peter denies that baptism removes sin. He says that it is “NOT the putting away of the filth of the flesh.”

ANSWER:

Baptism saves us, not by removing dirt from the body but the appeal to God for a clear conscience through the resurrection of Christ.”

This is clearly associating with baptism, the appeal to God for a clear conscience . That is how baptism “saves” us.

We do not teach that water removes sin. *“The blood of Jesus Christ his Son cleanses us from all sin.”* 1John 1:7.

However, the two are clearly connected in baptism.

Heb. 10: 17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more. 18 Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin. 19 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, 20 By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh; 21 And having an high priest over the house of God; 22 Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water.

John 3:5 *“except a man is born of water and spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God.”*

*1Joh 5:6-8. the **water**, spirit and blood agree in one.*

*Rom. 6:3. All who are baptized into Christ Jesus are **baptized** into his death.*

*Eph 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the **washing of water** by the word,*

*Acts 22:16 says, And now why do you wait? arise, and be **baptized**, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.*

OBJECTION: Their salvation was “*through* [Greek: “*dia*”] *water*,” not, by means of the water.

ANSWER:

If “*dia*” rules water out of salvation, then it rules the resurrection out of salvation. Our salvation is “*through* [Greek: “*dia*”] *the resurrection of Christ*.”

OBJECTION: Is not Baptism, like circumcision, just a “sign” or “seal” of faith (Rom. 4:11)?

ANSWER:

1. The passage cited says nothing about baptism.
2. Baptism was never called a “sign” or “seal.”
3. Whether baptism is a sign or seal, it is much different than circumcision.
 - a. None of the things said of baptism concerning salvation, forgiveness of sins etc. were said concerning circumcision.
 - b. Some things relative to circumcision do not relate to baptism.
 - 1) Circumcision was performed the 8th day after birth.
 - 2) Circumcision was only performed on boys.
 - 3) Circumcision was a removal of flesh.
4. May we apply the following things concerning circumcision to baptism?
 - a. *“But an uncircumcised male who is not circumcised in the flesh of his foreskin, that person shall be cut off from his people: (Genesis 17:14)*
 - b. Will failure to baptize our children subject us to the wrath of God? (Exodus 4:24-26)
 - c. As with circumcision, are we to forbid unbaptized people from eating the Lord’s Supper? (Exodus 12:48 cf. 1Cor. 5:7)

Tit. 3:5. Saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 22:16. Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling upon the name of the Lord

1Cor. 6:11. ye were washed

Heb. 10:22. having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water

Eph. 5:26. cleansed by the washing of water with the word.

Ac. 2:38-40, 47. Save yourselves... 47 ...And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved. (footnote: “being saved”)

SCRIPTURES CONNECTING BAPTISM WITH REMISSION OF SIN

Acts 2:38-40. *“Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit 40....save yourselves.... 41. They then that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about three thousand souls.... 47....And the Lord added to them day by day those that were being saved.”*

OBJECTION: It means, *“Repent, and be baptized because you have received remission of sins.”*

ANSWER:

The word, “for” (Greek: eis) does not mean “because of.” With a transitive verb it indicates forward motion, “to” “toward” or “into” with the result of being “in” or “on” (cf. Ac. 2:34 *“into [eis] the heavens,”* and 3:1-3, *“into the temple”*). It is never used in the sense of “because of.”

Matt. 26:28, has a similar construction. Was the blood of Jesus was poured out “because you have received remission of sins?”

If they had already been forgiven, why was the Holy Spirit and salvation still future? (Acts 2:40) One cannot be a Christian without having the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:9; Eph. 1:13-14; 1Cor. 12:13).

OBJECTION: *“Repent ye”* is plural and so is *“remission of your sins,”* while *“be baptized”* is singular, so it is *“remission of sins”* that refers back to *“repentance.”* It is repentance that is for the remission of sins, not baptism.

ANSWER:

In the first place, that is a misconstruction of the Greek.

Acts 2:38. *Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

repent [ye]	and	be baptized	each one	of you
metanoesate,	kai	baptistheetoo	hekastos	humoon
[plural]		[singular]	[singular]	[plural]

upon	the	name	of Jesus	Christ
epi	too	onomaoti	Ieesou	Christou

unto	remission	of the	sins	of you
eis	afesin	toon	hamartioon	humoon
				[plural]

and	you will receive	the	gift	of the	Holy	Spirit
kai	leempsesthe	tou	dorean	teen	hagiau	pneumatou

It can not be made to say --*“Repent ye for the remission of your sins and be baptized.”* If that is what God wished to say He could much more easily and clearly

have said so.

Secondly, the structure of the sentence does not uphold the contention. The clause, “*upon the name of Jesus Christ*” clearly refers to the immediately preceding verb, “*be baptized.*” Singular or plural has nothing to do with the relationship. Furthermore, the phrase, “*in the name,*” typically refers to baptism (Matt. 18:19; Acts 8:16; 10:48; 22:16; 19:5; Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27).

Likewise, the clause, “for the remission of the sins of you,” does not depend on singular or plural to determine whether it refers to repentance or baptism. The conjunction, “and” makes repentance and baptism both the basis of “remission of the sins of you” (plural). “You” (plural) are to repent and “you” (plural) both are each one to be baptized. If anything, because it is the immediate antecedent, it would be more likely that the clause would be the object of baptism than that it would be the object of repentance. I am persuaded that in fact the clause is the result of both.

In any case, without the Holy Spirit we do not belong to God (Rom. 8:1-16; Eph. 1:13-14; John 3:5; Tit. 3:5) and both repentance and baptism are conditions to receive it.

Acts 9:17-18; 22:16. Paul was told, “*arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name.*”

NOTE:

Paul had called Jesus, “Lord.” (22:10, cf. Rom. 10:10)

He fasted for three days (9:9).

He was praying (9:11).

He had seen a vision (9:12).

He was healed (9:17, 18).

Yet he still did not have the Holy Spirit (9:18, cf. Rom. 8:9-11).

And, HE STILL HAD HIS SINS.

He was told, “*Now why do you wait? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on his name* (22:16).

What would you tell a man to whom all this had happened and was still on his knees after three days? Would you tell him that his faith had saved him, or would you tell him what Ananias did? Ananias told him “*What are you waiting for, get up and be baptized and wash away your sins*”

OBJECTION: Was not Saul already a “brother” (Ac. 22:13)?

ANSWER:

He was a brother Jew, not a brother in Christ. In verse 1 of the same chapter he speaks to the unconverted people and Jewish leaders who were trying to kill him as, “*Brethren and fathers.*” The more common form of address was, “*Men and brethren*” (see Ac. 23:1). In Acts 23:1, 5, 6, Paul calls the council, “*brethren.*” Saul still did not have the Holy Spirit and still had his sins.

OBJECTION: This is Holy Spirit baptism.

ANSWER:

It says to “*arise and be baptized.*” He would not have to arise in order to be baptized in the Holy Spirit. Jesus could give him that on his knees just as well as when standing. This baptism was something he was told to ***obey***.

Acts 10:47-48. Cornelius, the Centurion, was told that, “*through his name every one that believes on him shall receive remission of sins.*”

Just as those on Pentecost (11:15-17), the Holy Spirit fell on the Cornelius and his household. This was done to demonstrate to the skeptical Jews that the Gentiles were acceptable (Acts 11:17). They were then commanded to be baptized water.

OBJECTION: Does not the fact that they had received the Holy Spirit prior to baptism, indicate that they were saved before baptism?

ANSWER:

Knowing their hearts had the kind of faith that would obey, Jesus baptized them in the Holy Spirit.

Were they saved when baptized in the Holy Spirit? That is possible. The passage does not specify when forgiveness took place. This may explain why, on the Day of Pentecost, no mention is made of the apostles being baptized. On the other hand, they, the other disciples, and the women may have been included among the three thousand baptized.

Cornelius was clearly an exceptional situation. Since it was an exception, that does not nullify the many other passages that relate baptism in water to forgiveness.

The lesson had to be firmly made to the Jews that the Gentiles were acceptable on an equal basis. Since Jesus baptized them in the Holy Spirit there was nothing to prevent Him from also granting forgiveness. He was God incarnate and free to do as He willed. A special act of mercy in no way negates the purpose of the baptism he ordained, or the need for us to obey it.

One problem with the idea that forgiveness came when Jesus Baptized them in the Holy Spirit is that, no Biblical teaching connects Holy Spirit baptism with remission of sins. The conclusion is purely speculative based on the assumption that God would not have had the Holy Spirit come upon unsaved people.

However, they were immediately commanded to be baptized in water. If their sins were already forgiven by the first baptism, why was it pointedly recorded that water baptism was immediately commanded?

God had the right to baptize them with the Holy Spirit before giving salvation.

God gave powers of the Holy Spirit even to his enemies. The high priest who was seeking to kill Jesus prophesied (John 11:50). That was certainly through the Holy Spirit, though not through Holy Spirit baptism (2Pet. 1:19-21).

A careful examination of the passage suggests that it may have been no exception at all. It specifies that it was Peter's words by which they were to be saved (Ac. 11:14). Peter had only begun to speak (Ac. 11:15) when the Holy Spirit fell on them. Peter had said that "through his name" those who believed on him should receive remission of sins (10:43 cf. Ac. 2:38; 22:16). After The Holy Spirit fell upon them, they were commanded to be baptized "in the name" of Jesus (10:48). This is consistent with other scriptures on the point of "remission of sins." The "falling" of the Holy Spirit upon them does not necessarily indicate the Holy Spirit was yet "in" them as may be indicated in Acts 2:38 and other passages.

IMPORTANCE INDICATED BY URGENCY IN BEING BAPTIZED.

Baptism was never delayed. There was never any prolonged period of instruction preceding it. The terms involved faith, a simple repentance from sin, confession of Jesus as Christ, and acceptance of Jesus as Lord (Ac. 2:38; 16:30, 31; Rom. 10:9, 10).

Acts 2:41. There were added unto them (cf. 2:47) "in that day" three thousand souls.

Acts 8:12. *When they believed Philip preaching the good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*

Acts 8:36-38. Nothing hindered the Eunuch from being immediately baptized in water on the road to Gaza.

Acts 22:16 (cf. Acts 9:18). *And now why do you wait? Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.*

Acts 10:46-48. Cornelius and his household were baptized, after which Peter and the others waited certain days.

Acts 16:13-15. Lydia, with her household was baptized at the river and then went to her house (16:15).

Acts 16:31-33. The Jailer and his household were baptized "the same hour of the night."

Acts 18:8. *Crispus the ruler of the synagogue was baptized with all his house and many of the Corinthians, hearing, were also baptized.*

Acts 19:5. Twelve disciples, baptized in John's baptism, were told that they should believe on [eis "into"] the Lord Jesus. "When they heard this" they were re-baptized "into the name of the Lord Jesus."

SUMMARY OF PURPOSE OF BAPTISM

Baptized into [eis] Christ.

Rom. 6:3. *All we who were baptized into Christ...*

Gal. 3:27. *For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ*

2Cor. 5:17. *If any man is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new.*

Romans 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus*

Matt. 28:19. *Baptizing them into [eis] the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit...*

Acts. 8:16. The Samaritans had been baptized into [eis] the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 19:4-5. Twelve at Ephesus were told to *believe on [eis "into"] Jesus* and were baptized into [eis] the name of the Lord Jesus.

Rom. 6:5. *united with Him*

We are baptized into one body (The church --1Cor. 12:12, 27, 28; Eph. 1:22-23; 5:23, 25, 26, 30, 32; Col. 1:18, 24)

1Cor. 12:12. *For in one Spirit were we all baptized into [eis] one body.* (cf. Eph. 1:4)

We are baptized into [eis] his death.

Rom. 6:3. *baptized into [eis] his death...*

Rom. 6:4. *we were buried therefore with him by baptism into [eis] death*

Rom. 6:6 *"our old man was crucified with Him"*

Rom. 6:8, 2; *"died with Christ"*

Col. 2:12. *buried with him*

Col. 2:20. *ye died with Christ*

We receive the Holy Spirit.

Note: If We do not have the Holy Spirit we are not of God. (Rom. 8:1-17; Eph. 1:13, 14; John 3:5; Tit. 3:5)

1Cor. 12:13. *and were all made to drink of [eis "into"] one Spirit.*"

John 3:3-5. Born of water and the Spirit"

Ac. 2:38. *and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*"

Ac. 9:17 (cf. Acts 22:16; 2:38) Paul was to be filled with the Holy Spirit.

Tit. 3:5. *Saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.*"

We are baptized for [eis "into"] remission of sins.

Ac. 2:38. *Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins.* (cf. 3:19; 20:21)

Acts 22:16. *wash away your sins*

Eph. 5:26. *cleansed by the washing of water with the word.*

1Cor. 6:11. *but ye were washed*

Rom. 6:6 *that the body of sin might be done away*

Rom. 6:6 *no longer be in bondage to sin*

Rom. 6:7, 17, 18 *justified (freed) from sin*

Col. 2:13. *having forgiven us all our trespasses*

2Cor. 5:17. *If any man is in Christ Jesus, he is a new creature: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new. (cf, Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27. baptized into Christ.)*

Rom. 8:1 *There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus* (cf, Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27. baptized into Christ.)

We receive new life.

John 3:3-5. *Except a man is born of water and Spirit he cannot enter into the kingdom of God."*

Rom. 6:4. *So we also might walk in newness of life.*

2Cor. 5:17. *If any man is in Christ he is a new creature, old things have passed away; behold, they are become new.*

(cf, Rom. 6:3; Gal. 3:27. ...baptized into Christ.)

Col. 2:12, 3:1. ...*raised with Him*

Col. 2:13. ...*you did he make alive with him...*

Tit. 3:5. *Saved by the washing of regeneration (cf. Heb. 10:22)*

We are saved.

Mark 16:16. *He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.*

Ac. 2:38-40, 47. 40. ...save yourselves... 47 ...*And the Lord added to them day by day those that were saved.* (footnote: "being saved")

1Pe. 3:21. *the like figure in which baptism does also now save you*

Tit. 3:5. *saved by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit.*

OBJECTION: ARE YOU SAYING THAT EVERYONE WHO IS NOT BAPTIZED WILL BE LOST?

ANSWER:

We often face such questions, not only with respect to baptism but also with regard to faith and repentance from sin. The question is based on an invalid presumption. It is prejudicial because it presumes that somehow if the one who asks it does not like the answer, it can not be true. It assumes that if the person being asked would say what pleased the person doing the asking, the situation would be otherwise. Walking by faith is often accepting what we do not like because we trust that God knows best.

Some claim there could be no hell because they can not accept the idea that a loving God would send people to such a horrible place. Some claim everyone will eventually be saved because a loving God could not eternally reject any of His children.

However, the fact is that how we feel about it will not change the truth. "How then could God judge the world? (Rom. 3:5, 6)

The question is invalid because it places a burden on us, which is beyond our capacity to know, and cannot change the facts. I have no way to know the mind of God and all of the circumstances he may consider in judgment. I can only accept what he reveals. My understanding of them may be imperfect but that does not change the truth of God. The secret things belong to God. Only what is revealed belongs to us (Deut. 29:29).

I am not responsible either for what God has said or the decisions He will make at the judgment. I want no one to be lost. I will not be any one's judge before God.

If He wants to save someone on the basis of His understanding of their heart--he is quite capable of doing so. If he chooses not to, the refusal of all of the people in the world will not make it otherwise (Rom. 3:4). Sincerity alone does not alter the truth of God (Prov 16:25).

Someone once asked me, "What if someone in an airplane accepted Christ and the plane crashed. Would he be lost because he had not been baptized?" I turned it back on him. I said, that is a very "iffy" question. It first is based on, "if" the situation arose. It further depends on "if" he called on Christ at the last minute. It depends on if his last minute acceptance of Christ would be acceptable (which it might not --Matt. 25:1-12). It depends upon "if" God lets him be killed, which he might not. Certainly if God wanted a sincere man to be baptized He is capable of providing the opportunity--even if he has to crash it into the sea! It presumes that if I thought the person would be lost, that would necessarily prove me wrong.

Even more importantly, it presumes that if God's grace covered a situation where a person had no opportunity, that would necessarily nullify rules that apply to those who can. Is the person who would, but can't, necessarily required the same as those who can but won't?

This is just as much of a problem for those who profess "faith only" as for those who believe we are baptized into Christ. For example, Rom. 10:9-10 says, "*with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" What about those who can not speak? We are saved by faith but what about infants and people who were born without the capacity to understand about Jesus? What about those in the world who have never heard about Jesus? Are they all damned? If God's grace is able to reach across this problem, does that exempt us from believing and obeying the gospel?

Rom. 9:10. *And not only this; but when Rebecca also had conceived by one, even by our father Isaac; 11 (For the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calls;) 12 It was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger. 13 As it is written, Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated. 14 What shall we say then? Is there unrighteousness with God? God forbid. 15 For he saith to Moses, I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion. 16 So then it is not of him that wills, nor of him that runs, but of God that shows mercy. 17 For the scripture saith unto Pharaoh, Even for this same purpose have I raised thee up, that I might shew my power in thee, and that my name might be declared throughout all the earth. 18 Therefore hath he mercy on whom he will have mercy, and whom he will he hardens. 19 Thou wilt say then unto me, Why doth he yet find fault? For who hath resisted his will? 20 Nay but, O man, who art thou that repliest against God? Shall the thing formed say to him that formed it, Why hast thou made me thus? 21 Hath not the potter power over the clay, of the same lump to make one vessel unto honor, and another unto dishonor? 22 What if God, willing to shew his wrath, and to make his power known, endured with much longsuffering the*

vessels of wrath fitted to destruction: 23 And that he might make known the riches of his glory on the vessels of mercy, which he had afore prepared unto glory,”

Salvation is by Grace. God has the right to set the rules as he sees fit and to make exceptions according to His mercy. He owns the bank of grace. He is able to look at the heart and dispense as he sees fit. I am only the “teller” and my job is to tell what he said.

Salvation is by faith. God looks at the heart. As God chose to count uncircumcision as circumcision (Rom. 2:26), he could count non-baptism as baptism. But that is his right, not ours. Those who failed to circumcise faced the wrath of God (Gen. 17:14; Ex. 4:24-26). Under the Old Testament they were required physical circumcision--but what God was seeking was circumcision of the heart. However, those who rejected circumcision were rejecting that of the heart also. It was not until physical circumcision was repealed that it could be disregarded by those to whom it was commanded. In refusing to do what God said we manifest a deficient faith (2Tim. 9:8). Those who refuse to be baptized may find that they also fall short on having a living faith (James 2:14-26).

OBJECTION: WHAT ABOUT THE MANY SINCERE PEOPLE WHO ARE NOT BAPTIZED?

ANSWER:

We are certainly thankful for every step in anyone's faith and service to God. In Acts 19 we also find twelve disciples of John. Upon questioning them Paul discovered there were some important things lacking in their faith. They did not believe on Jesus. After correcting this they were re-baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.

In the case of Cornelius (Acts 10) we find a good man serving God as best he knew. God heard his prayers and sent someone to inform him more perfectly. The wonderful thing about this man was that when he heard it he responded with joy rather than becoming indignant because he learned something that needed changing.

We find the same principle elsewhere. In Exodus, Moses was sent to lead God's people out of Egypt. The plagues were visited upon Pharaoh with the tenth being the protection of the firstborn through the blood of a lamb (Ex. 12:7). God then led them out with a pillar of cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night (Ex. 13:21). In Ex. 14:13 they came to the Red Sea and Moses said, “Stand Still and see the salvation of Jehovah.” But God said, “Why do you cry unto me? Go forward” (Ex. 14:15). They did and the sea parted before them and they went through with the waters standing like a wall on each side (Ex. 14:22, 29). Exodus 14:30 says, “Thus Jehovah saved Israel that day out of the hand of the Egyptians.” First Corinthians 10:1-2 says they were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. Thus we see that God was with them and blessing them before baptism but they were not yet saved out of Egypt. These things were written for our learning (1Cor. 10:6, 11). They were types and shadows of things to come (Col. 2:16-17; Heb. 8 and 9).

OBJECTION: SALVATION NOT EARNED BY WORKS

Some insist that belief that we are baptized into Christ is salvation by works. They claim we are justified by “faith only” (Rom. 4:4).

ANSWER:

The Bible nowhere speaks of baptism as being a work.

Luther said,

For to be baptized in the name of God is to be baptized not by men, but by God Himself. Therefore although it is performed by human hands, it is nevertheless truly God’s own work. From this fact every one may himself readily infer that it is a far higher work than any work performed by a man or a saint. For what work greater than the work of God can we do? --The Larger Catechism, Part Fourth –of Baptism. (Ages Digital Library, p. 111)

But if they say, as they are accustomed: Still Baptism is itself a work, and you say works are of no avail for salvation; what then, becomes of faith?

Answer: Yes, our works, indeed, avail nothing for salvation; Baptism, however, is not our work, but God’s... -- The Larger Catechism, Part Fourth –of Baptism. (Ages Digital Library p. 115)

The Anabaptists cavil as to how the salvation of man is to be effected by water. The simple answer is, that all things are possible to him who believes in God Almighty. –Luther, Table Talk, Of Baptism 349 (Ages Digital Library, p.175)

We are justified by faith (Gal. 3:26-27) but James 2:14-26 says, “not by faith only.” Note that verse 14 specifies he is speaking of salvation. There are two kinds of faith. A faith that obeys is a living faith. A faith that does not work is dead (James 2:26; John 14:21, 23- 24; 8:47; 1John 2:3-6; 3:10, 24; 4:13; 5:13; Matt. 7:21-24).

Nor are we saved by “Water only” (1John 5:6-8). Water does not save. No act that we can do has any power to earn salvation. However, God requires a living faith. Faith must be obeyed (Rom. 6:17; 1:5; 2:8; 16:26; Gal. 5:7). Faith is “made perfect” through obedience (James 2:22).

The Gospel must be obeyed (2Thes. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:17; 3:1). The gospel is the death, burial and resurrection of Christ (1Cor. 15:1- 4). When we are baptized, we obey this in a picture. We obey “from the heart” (Rom. 6:17) and thereby spiritually accept His lordship in his death, burial and resurrection (Rom. 6:3-18; Col. 2:12. 13).

Rom. 6:17. Obedience, “from the heart,” is counted for righteousness.

Col. 2:12. “we are raised through faith in the working of God”

Gal. 3:26, 27 We are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. FOR as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.

1Pe. 3:21. The like figure wherein ye are saved by baptism, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the request to God for a clear conscience, by the resurrection of Christ

Mark 16:16. "*He that believes and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believes not shall be condemned.*"

Acts 2:38. "*Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins;...*" 41. "*They then that received the word were baptized.*"

Acts 19:1-5. This illustrates the need to have the right understanding. These twelve men did not know that the Holy Spirit had been given. They had been baptized into John's baptism. After having been taught that we are to believe in [eis "into"] Jesus, they were baptized, "into" [eis] the name of the Lord Jesus.

PART III. BAPTISM FOR BELIEVERS, NOT INFANTS

Baptism is a choice one makes for one's self, not someone else. That would make one saved by works, not of self but of others. That is not salvation by faith.

Faith is the basis upon which baptism is performed.

Matt. 28:18-20. "*...make disciples of all nations, baptizing them.* (Note: The Greek indicates disciples were to be baptized.)

Mark 16:16. "*He that believes and is baptized shall be saved*"

Acts 2:38. "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of your sins.*"

Acts 2:41 "*Those who received the word were baptized....*"

Acts 8:12. "*When they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.*"

Acts 10:2. *Cornelius feared God with all his house*

Acts 10:35. "*he that fears him, and works righteousness, is acceptable*

Acts 10:43. "*through his name every one that believes on him shall receive remission of sins.*"

Acts 16:30-34. "*What must I do to be saved? 31. And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and thou shalt be saved, thou and thy house. And they spake the word of the Lord unto him, with all that were in his house. 34....and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having believed God.*

The jailer could not do the believing for all who were in his house. However, his faith was the means by which the others came to believe and be baptized.

Acts 18:8. "*And Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.*"

Acts 19:4-5. "*And Paul said, John baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him that should come after him, that is, on Jesus. 5. And when they heard this, they were baptized into the name of the Lord Jesus.*"

Acts 22:16. "*Arise and be baptized...calling on his name.*"

Rom. 6:17. *You became obedient from the heart (cf. 6:3-18)*

Rom. 10:9, 17. "*If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved 17 So belief comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ.*"

Gal. 3:26-27 "*For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. 27. For as many*

of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ.”
 Eph. 5:26. *“cleansed by the washing of water with the word.”*
 Col. 2:12. *“having been buried with him in baptism wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God.”*
 Heb. 10:22. *“having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water.”*
 1Peter 3:21. *“...baptism does now save you, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the appeal for a good conscience toward God, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”*

OBJECTION: Infants are given faith by God when baptized by their parents.

ANSWER:

Rom. 10:17. *“Faith comes by hearing and hearing by the word of God.”*
 Nothing is said about babies believing. Nothing is said of salvation on the basis of the parents' faith.

OBJECTION: Baptism came in the room of circumcision. Since circumcision was given to children, baptism should be likewise.

ANSWER:

As we shall see, the New Covenant, under which we live, is not like the old (Heb. 8:8-11). Under the old, they circumcised babies and then had to teach them to know the Lord. Now, we come under the new by accepting it by the “hearing of faith” (Gal. 3:2, 5). It is written on the Christian's heart (2Cor. 3:2-3). We do not teach a brother to know the Lord, for all know him, from the least to the greatest.

Baptism did not come “in the room of circumcision.” Our circumcision is “of the heart” and “not made with hands” (Col. 2:11). If baptism is in the “room of circumcision” then why is it not required to be performed the 8th day? Why is it not performed only on males? Where is the evidence for such a claim?

Infants are not damned.

Wesley, founder of Methodism said,

“If infants are guilty of original sin, then they are proper subjects of baptism; seing, in the ordinary way, they cannot be saved, unless this be washed away by baptism. It has been already proved, that this original stain cleaves to every child of man; and thereby they are children of wrath, and liable to eternal damnation.” (Treatise on Baptism, in Doctrinal Tracts, p. 251)

The Bible says,

Heb. 8:8-11. *“For finding fault with them, he saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, That I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; 9. Not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers....For this is the covenant that I will make with the house of Israel after those days...I will put my laws into their mind, And on their hearts also will I write them:.... 11. And they shall not teach every man his fellow-citizen, And every man his brother, saying, Know the*

Lord: For all shall know me, From the least to the greatest.”

This text is quoted from Jer. 31:31-34. A look at that passage reveals that in the verses just preceding (Jer. 31:27-30) it speaks of the time to come when it would be no more said, “*The fathers have eaten sour grapes, and the children's teeth are set on edge. 30. But every one shall die for his own iniquity: every man that eats the sour grapes, his teeth shall be set on edge.*” Little children will not be damned for the sins of the fathers.

Under the Old Covenant an infant was circumcised the 8th day and thereafter had to be taught to “*know the Lord.*” Under the New, they would hear the gospel and accept the Lord before coming under it. Our circumcision is of the heart (Col. 2:11-12) and must be accomplished through hearing. No Christian needs to be taught to know the Lord. Since faith comes by hearing (Rom. 10:17) and is written on our hearts (2Cor. 3:3, 14), all Christians know him.

Under the New Covenant, infants are not held responsible for sins of the fathers. If it was necessary to remove the stain of original sin through baptism surely that would have clearly said but nothing is said to parents about baptizing children. It would be entirely inconsistent with the plan and love of God to damn infants before they had any chance and because parents failed to baptize them. If we can save infants by baptizing them, why not set up a program in which we provide free natal delivery to all who will have their babies baptized? Perhaps we could provide a gift to induce parents to permit their babies to be baptized. We might entitle it, “DUNK A KID FOR CHRIST”!

Does this sound like children are damned?

Matt. 18:1-3, 10. “*Who then is greatest in the kingdom of heaven? 2. And he called to him a little child... 3. and said,...Except ye turn, and become as little children, ye shall in no wise enter into the kingdom of heaven.... 10. for I say unto you, that in heaven their angels do always behold the face of my Father who is in heaven.*”

Matt. 19:13-14. “*then were there brought unto him little children, that he should lay his hands on them, and pray: ...Suffer the little children, and forbid them not to come unto me: for to such belongs the kingdom of heaven. 15. And he laid his hands on them, and departed thence.* (Note: He laid his hands on them. He did not baptize them.)

OBJECTION: Infants have the original sin of Adam and must be cleansed in order to be saved.

Rom. 5:12-14. “*Death passed upon all men for all have sinned.*”

ANSWER:

Through Adam, death passed upon all men. Baptism does not keep us from dying. Christ removed death from all in that all will all be raised (1Cor. 15:22). Nothing is said of baptizing infants to remove this problem.

OBJECTION: We are born in sin.

Ps. 51:5. “*In sin did my mother conceive me.*”

ANSWER:

Under the New Testament, the sin of the mother is not visited upon the child. (Jer. 31:27-30; Heb. 8:8-11).

OBJECTION: Ps. 58:3 says, *The wicked go astray from the womb.*

ANSWER:

The whole verse reads, “The wicked go astray from the womb: They go astray as soon as they are born, speaking lies.” No child speaks lies at birth. This is speaking of the time beyond birth when children know right from wrong. Note that this speaks only of the wicked. This does not indicate all infants are sinful before they are old enough to speak lies. Nothing is here said of baptizing infants.

Infants were not required to be baptized

OBJECTION: “All nations” (Matt. 28:19) includes infants.

ANSWER:

The passage does not say that all nations should be baptized. It says that “disciples” (learners) are to be made from all nations. The Greek shows that disciples are the ones to be baptized.

matheeteusate	panta	ta	ethne,	baptizontes	autous
disciple	all	The	nations	baptizing	them

“Baptizing” is a present participle. Summers Grammar (p. 89- 90) says the present participle means it is *contemporaneous with the main verb*. The main verb is, “disciple” and thus the action of baptizing is contemporaneous with making disciples.

Because, “them” (the ones being baptized) is masculine gender, the word it modifies must also be masculine. However, “Nations” is neuter and therefore cannot be the ones directly referred to. “Them” refers to “disciples” implied in the verb, “mathe-teusate.” Literally, it is saying, “*Going to all nations, make disciples, baptizing them [the disciples]...*”

OBJECTION: In Acts 2:39, the promise is “*to you and to your children.*”

ANSWER:

Children are to be baptized when old enough to “repent.”

OBJECTION: Some of the households that were baptized must have included infants.

ANSWER:

A check of each case indicates this is improbable. There is evidence of age and/or faith in each.

Cornelius:

-Acts 10:2. Cornelius *feared God with all his house.*

-Acts 10:35. “*he that fears him, and works righteousness, is acceptable*”

-Acts 10:43. “*through his name every one that believes on him shall receive remission of sins.*”

Lydia:

Acts 16:14. Lydia was a seller of purple, across the sea from her home of Thyatira. The picture is consistent with a successful trades-woman unhampered by infants. The idea that she had an infant is a wishful speculation. We don't even know that she was married. She does not seem to have consulted a husband before inviting Paul to her home. "Household" would include servants.

The Philippian Jailer"

Acts 16:31. In the case of the Jailer, they spoke the word of the Lord to all in the house. After baptism, his house "rejoiced."

Crispus:

Acts 18:8. Crispus "believed" with all his house.

Stephanas:

1Cor. 1:16. The household of Stephanas was baptized, but about three years afterwards, when this letter was written, they had "*set themselves to minister unto the saints*" (1Cor. 16:15). This would not be said of infants.

OBJECTION: Matt. 19:14. "suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me..."

ANSWER:

"*Little children*" may be old enough to believe (18:6). However, in the case cited, nothing is said of them needing to be baptized. They only had his hands laid on them (19:13, 15).

OBJECTION: Infant baptism was accepted by the early church.

ANSWER:

Various errors were practiced at various times by some of the "fathers." For example, nude baptism before the congregation and even anointing women by male priests. See: Gospel of Thomas, 21:, 37; Hippolytus of Rome 230 ce in Apostolic Tradition XXI; Also, The Gospel of Philip 101 (Labib, pl. 123, 21-5). See also, Chrisostom and Cyril of Jerusalem. That does not make these things authorized of God.

Jesus had problems with the "*traditions of the Fathers*" in his time (Mark 7:1-13). They imposed washings not authorized by God. In vain they worshipped, teaching as their doctrines the precepts of men. They left the commandments of God to keep their traditions. By their traditions they made void the word of God. The issue is not whether some ancient Christians practiced it but whether infant baptism is taught in God's word. It is not.

Paul warned the church at Ephesus against false teachings that would arise (Acts 20:28-30). John speaks of the antichrists that had already arisen (1Jhn 2:18). We are to be founded on what the Bible says (Matt. 7:24-25). There is no baptism of infants in the Bible.

BIBLIOGRAPHY: The following three books have the highest recommendation as resources on these subjects.

“Did Jesus Command Immersion?” by Lawson, Standard Publishing Co.

“Handbook On Baptism” by Shepherd, Gospel Advocate Co.

“The Gospel Plan of Salvation” by Brents, Gospel Advocate Co.