

The Right Baptism

Linville Dunaway, Corinth Christian Church

Acts 19:1-5, "And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus?"

Baptism is one of the doctrines of Christ that is sometimes misunderstood. Not only the question of should it be done, but even the method and the purpose of baptism. If we read and accept what God's Word says about baptism then there is no

room for confusion. The Lord said to do it, the apostles taught it, and the church practiced it. Baptism is not everything, but along with hearing the gospel, believing, repenting of sin, confession of sins and that Jesus is Lord, and living for the Lord, it is part of the plan of salvation.

Why be baptized? Well, for one thing the Lord Jesus said to do it. He also showed by example. It also symbolizes the death of the old sinful man, the burial, and the resurrection of the new spiritual man. Romans 6: 4. Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Some will say that they have seen some who were baptized continue to live in sin. I don't doubt it. Baptism will not do any good unless the person truly believes, truly repents of sin, and truly desires to live for the Lord. Otherwise he will come up just a wet sinner. By the same token, there are those who have gone to the altar, made a confession, who continued to live in

sin. There are even those who teach that sin won't cause such a one to be lost. The scriptures say different.

As to the form of baptism and the purpose, we have seen that the bible is clear on that as well. Paul baptized believers in Ephesus because they were baptized unto John's baptism, not into Jesus for the remission of sins. It should not be done as a rite to gain admission into a local church, but for the remission of sins. When done properly, it need only be done once.

Baptism was taught by the Lord and the apostles and was done by immersion. It was centuries later when man decided to change how it was done. Sprinkling and pouring water on someone's head were substituted for immersion. Then somewhere along the way some decided that it need not be done at all. These changes were made without the authority of the Holy Spirit. It was simply man doing his own will, and calling it the will of God. This is not going to be accepted by the Lord. None of us has the right to change anything that God has commanded.

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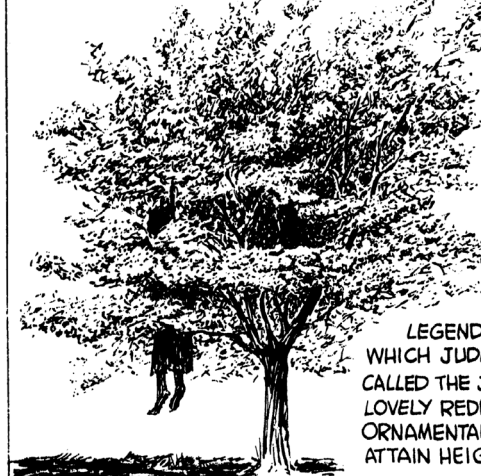
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JUDAS ISCARIOT, THE BETRAYER OF JESUS, WAS THE ONLY MAN AMONG THE ORIGINAL TWELVE DISCIPLES WHO DID NOT HAIL FROM GALILEE. THAT HE WAS STRONGLY DISLIKED FROM THE OUTSET BY THE OTHERS IS APPARENT FROM THE VERY WORDS OF JOHN (JOHN 12:6). JUDAS WAS THE TREASURER OF THE GROUP—"HOLDING THE BAG" WAS THE EXPRESSION THEY USED—DENOTING THAT HE RECEIVED ALL GIFTS AND MONEY CONTRIBUTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC, PAID FOR ANYTHING THE GROUP MIGHT NEED (FOOD, CLOTHES, ETC.), AND DISPENSED MONEY TO THE POOR, ALL IN JESUS' NAME. BUT JOHN SPOKE FOR ALL OF THEM WHEN HE SAID JUDAS WAS A THIEF WHO DIDN'T CARE FOR THE POOR AT ALL, BUT CARRIED THE BAG OUT OF HIS LOVE FOR THE MONEY THAT WAS IN IT AND THE SENSE OF POWER AND IMPORTANCE IT GAVE HIM!



WHY HE BETRAYED JESUS HAS ALWAYS BEEN A CONJECTURE OPEN TO LENGTHY DISCUSSION. SOME HAVE SAID IT WAS PURELY HIS GREED FOR THE THIRTY PIECES OF SILVER, OTHERS MAINTAIN IT WAS OUT OF ANGER AT THE REBUKE HE RECEIVED FROM JESUS... (JOHN 12:1-8), ANOTHER THEORY IS THAT JUDAS, ALWAYS ANXIOUS AS TREASURER TO GET MORE MONEY, SAW AN EASY CHANCE TO ENLARGE THE TREASURY WITH NO REAL DANGER TO JESUS—FOR, HE REASONED THAT THE SON OF GOD COULD COMMAND LEGIONS OF ANGELS TO RESCUE HIM WHENEVER HE WISHED! BE THAT AS IT MAY, ONCE THE DEED WAS DONE AND THE COLD LIGHT OF REASON REVEALED TO JUDAS THE ENORMITY OF HIS CRIME, HE REPENTED IN A FRENZY OF DISPAIR, HURLED THE BLOOD MONEY BACK AT THE PRIESTS AND RUSHED OUT AND HANGED HIMSELF!



LEGEND SAYS THAT THE TREE ON WHICH JUDAS HANGED HIMSELF (SINCE CALLED THE JUDAS TREE) WAS THE LOVELY REDBUD TREE, A FLOWERING ORNAMENTAL SHRUB WHICH CAN ATTAIN HEIGHTS OF FORTY FEET!

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