

THE GREENWOOD BULLETIN

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Is Baptism The Door Into The Church?

Lincoln Bible Reader

Many questions pertaining to things of the Bible go unconsidered by many today because they believe them to be too insignificant. But Bible questions need to have our earnest care. We believe this question is a legitimate one and that there is a Bible answer for it. We furthermore believe this question cannot be rightfully answered without giving it a Bible answer.

Many manuals of denominations discuss this issue. Here is a statement from the Hiscox Standard Manual For Baptist Churches (page 22); "It is most likely that in the Apostolic age when there was but 'one Lord, one faith, and one baptism,' and no differing denominations existed, the baptism of a convert by that very act constituted him a member of the church, and at once

endowed him with all the rights and privileges of full membership. In that sense, 'baptism was the door into the church.' Now, it is different; and while the churches are desirous of receiving members, they are wary and cautious that they do not receive unworthy persons."

This author readily recognizes what the New Testament now says happened in the days of the apostles, but he alleges the practice is now different. This is amazing! The New Testament still says exactly what it was saying when the apostles wrote it, but the practice of the apostolic has changed with the churches today. What makes for this change? If the authority that produced the action of the churches in the days of Peter, James, and John has not changed, how can the action today be changed? Mr. Hiscox says that "baptism was the door into the church" back then, but "now it is different."

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Let the preachers and churches who teach and practice this give answer as to how this can be.

Baptism puts one into Christ (Romans 6:3, 4). All who are baptized into Christ, put on Christ (Galatians 3:27). Baptism puts one into the death of Christ (Romans 6:3-5) where he can enjoy all that Christ died for him to have. Baptism puts one into the body of Christ, which is the church (1 Corinthians 12:13; Ephesians 1:22, 23; Colossians 1:18, 24). Now these passages are the ones which caused Mr. Hiscox to say that baptism was the door into the church in apostolic days. Luke says the Lord "added to the church daily" the ones who thus submitted to Christ's authority as expressed by the apostles. The practice of denominations is a departure from apostolic doctrine.

The baptism authorized by Christ puts one into the body of Christ-which is the church of Christ.

HEAVEN'S NOT MUCH LIKE OUR TOWN

Bellaire church of Christ

We live in a great part of the country. It's an exciting city with much to occupy our time. The economy is good, and we have every convenience. Still, upon reflection, I think we'd all agree that it's not much like heaven. We have several things in our town that you're never see in heaven.

Our town has adult video stores and night clubs, but heaven does not. There are many places of temptation in our community, and the devil's workers are busy. What a treat heaven will be. No tempter and no temptation.

Our town has many drug stores, but heaven doesn't. Here we have to deal with everything from headaches to cancer, and there are drugs to help with everything. John promised (really, it was Jesus), **". . .neither shall there be any more pain . . ."** (Revelation 21:4).

Our town has a jail, but heaven doesn't. Here wickedness permeates our society. The daily news tells of everything from theft to murder. We see abuse of strangers and loved ones. Doors and windows must be secured at all times. In heaven God is the security.

Our town has hospitals and nursing homes; heaven doesn't. Regardless of age, our bodies need attention from those qualified to help. What a blessing that we have all this help available. What a sorrow that we and our loved ones need it frequently. In heaven we'll have incorruptible bodies, fit for eternity with a loving God.

Our town has a cemetery, but heaven doesn't. No matter how qualified and loving the care, here we soon die. There are no hillsides dotted with the markers of loved ones "across Jordan." You won't find silent cities of the dead in heaven, for no one ever dies there (Revelation 21:4)!

First Day of School

By Bill Beasely

The first day of each school year brings forth a covey of problems. This is true not only for the school (teachers, principal, etc.), but also for the students and their parents. Shortly after lunch time, on the first day of her son's 2nd grade, our daughter received a telephone call from the school office requesting her presence . .

.since our grandson ("Pap's little preacher man") was in trouble.

The first day of school and already in trouble! No, he had not kicked his teacher. Nor had he gotten into a fight with another student. He had not tried to burn the school down. But he was in trouble! What had he done?

It seems that her little fellow had the audacity, the unmitigated gall to tell the other seven students at his table, "We cannot eat until we pray." Oh my, I wonder where he heard that. Who was corrupting this child?

Thank God for little children who, by following the example of Jesus (Matthew 15:36) and heeding the exhortation of God's word (1 Corinthians 10:30; 1 Thess. 5:18) are wiser (i.e., have more common sense) than teachers, principals, Boards of Education, and black-robed jurists who constitute the Supreme (so-called) Court of the United States.

"I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditation" (Psalm 119:99).

"Little Preacher Man, there is another verse which

you, even at your tender years, need to learn: ***'Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast your pearls before the swine, lest haply they trample them under their feet, and turn and rend you'*** (Matthew 7:6).¹ The pearl of a good example and righteous exhortation, brought forth your trouble on the first day of school."

Saddest of all, to me, is to think about the one child in seven who was "offended" by what was said. What kind of example and teaching must he be receiving in his home?

SEVEN DEADLY SINS

Via *The Reminder*

Truth, if it becomes a weapon against people.

Beauty, if it becomes vanity.

Love, if it becomes possessive.

Loyalty, if it becomes blind, careless truth.

Tolerance, if it becomes indifference.

Self-Confidence, if it becomes arrogance.

Faith, if it becomes self-righteous.

Don't Be Late

"Do not wait until death has claimed some acquaintance, and then indulge in regrets that you failed to speak a word of encouragement or appreciation."

—C. R. Nichol—