

Rom. 14:19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32

“And ye shall know the truth and the truth shall make you free”

June 11, 2023

AN INQUIRY INTO BAPTISM

by Jefferson David Tant Jr.

Editor's note: We will be presenting a series of articles designed to inform on this topic by consulting all the appropriate sources of knowledge on the subject. JCS.

Sprinkling, Pouring or Immersion WHICH SHALL IT BE?

Introduction:

Since the Bible teaches that baptism is an essential part of my relationship with Christ (**Mark 16:16; Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3-5**, etc.), then it behooves me to make sure that my baptism is pleasing to the one who has given the ordinance. It isn't to please family, my church or myself. I can only strive to please the Lord. *“For am I now seeking the favor of men, or of God? Or am I striving to please men? If I were still striving to please men, I should not be a servant of Christ”* (**Gal. 1:10**).

The Bible teaches also that there is now but one baptism (**Ephesians 4:5**). The religious world now offers multiple types, from immersion in water to sprinkling of rose petals, to baptism on behalf of one's dead ancestors. Therefore, a decision and choice needs to be made concerning this.

Other factors that have a bearing include not only the **mode** of baptism, but also the **purpose**, the **proper subjects**, as well as the **element** in which baptism takes place. The Bible clearly teaches that only believing adults are to be baptized, and not infants. These topics need to be considered, but the purpose of this study is to inquire into the **manner** or **mode** of baptism, as to whether it shall be by immersion in water or by other means.

To the best of my knowledge, all of the scholars, historians, and others quoted herein are those who practice the sprinkling or pouring of water for baptism. I have purposely sought out no author who practices

immersion, though there are thousands of reputable men who could be quoted who do practice immersion. The reason for this is that the **understanding** of those who **practice** sprinkling or pouring might effectively **contradict** their own **practices**. In other words, their understanding of what the scriptures teach shows the inconsistency of their practice. Furthermore, their works in support of immersion cannot be dismissed as the words of those who might be prejudiced by some church doctrine, or whatever, in favor of the practice of immersion.

This study is offered with the sincere desire that it may help us to a more perfect understanding of the Will of God.

THE TESTIMONY OF THE BIBLICAL CONTEXT

“John came, who baptized in the wilderness, and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins. And there went out unto him all the country of Judea, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins” (**Mark 1:4-5**).

NOTE 1: They came to the Jordan River. Such would hardly have been necessary if the baptisms were done by sprinkling or pouring. It would have been an inconvenience wholly without reason.

NOTE 2: The text says they were baptized of John in the river. It does not say **at**, but **in**.

“Jesus was baptized of John in the Jordan. And straightway coming up out of the water....” (**Mark 1:9-10**).

NOTE: If He came **up out of** the water, it is obvious that He first went down **into** the water. Why did He do this, unless the practice was immersion?

“And John also was baptizing in Aenon near Salim, because there was much water there, and they came and were baptized” (**John 3:23**).

NOTE: If the scripture is not referring to immersion, then why the necessity of *much* water? Wouldn't a few drops of water do just as well? It says he was baptizing there *because* there was much water. The presence of much water was neither incidental nor accidental.

“And he (eunuch) commanded the chariot to stand still; and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away....” (Acts 8:38-39).

NOTE: It is obvious that immersion is implied in this passage, considering the going down into and the coming up out of the water.

“And now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on His name” (Acts 22:16).

NOTE: Here the washing of the flesh symbolized the washing of the soul. Which best represents the washing of the flesh: immersion, sprinkling, or pouring?

“We were buried therefore with Him through baptism into death; that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4).

NOTE 1: Which best represents a burial: sprinkling, pouring, dropping of rose petals, or immersion?

NOTE 2: Which best represents a resurrection: having water sprinkled on the head, or coming up from an immersion in water?

“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ” (Galatians 3:27).

NOTE: In the figure given, we clothe ourselves with Christ, putting Him on as we would a garment. Since this is done in baptism, which best represents the surrounding of ourselves with Christ (putting Him on): immersion, sprinkling, or pouring?

“One Lord, one faith, one baptism...” (Ephesians 4:5).

NOTE: If there is only one baptism now, which shall we choose (of the three that are most popularly offered): immersion, sprinkling, or pouring?

“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” (Colossians 2:12).

NOTE: (See comments on **Romans 6:4**).

DO YOU UNDERSTAND IT?

The apostle said, *So belief cometh of hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ. (Romans 10:17)* On this occasion Paul is implying hearing is equal to

understanding. Recognizing the message of the gospel will lead one to believe in Jesus as the Christ, the Son of God. Once we believe in Him, we can then learn by study that Jesus authorized the words of the New Testament (**John 16:13,14**). Then by studying those words of His, Paul says we can then understand the gospel (**Eph. 3:1-4**).

That is simple enough to understand, yet understanding is sometimes difficult. One of the things that affects or derails our understanding is having a preconceived notion about a thing before we examine its information. Such is often the case with understanding what the Bible is teaching us.

I have heard many people who are believers in the Bible refer to **Matthew 24:6** where Jesus says *“You will be hearing of wars and rumors of wars. See that you are not frightened, for those things must take place, but that is not yet the end.* They then conclude these wars and rumors of wars are to be observed as a sign of the end of the world. Now no one would tell you the **24th Chapter of Matthew** is one of the easier passages to understand. Yet, as Paul said, we can because it was written for our understanding.

In short, the major misunderstanding of this passage is a failure to see the specific judgment of which Jesus speaks. There are two judgments mentioned in the **24th Chapter of Matthew** and the passage itself gives us a clue to distinguish between the two. In **verse 34** Jesus says this of those things He has mentioned prior in the Chapter, *“Truly I say to you, this generation will not pass away until all these things take place.* That clearly eliminates His second coming in which all will be judged (**Matt. 25:34-46; John 5:28,29**), since none of that generation is still alive and He has not returned yet.

The second half of the clue is in the **36th verse**, *“But of that day and hour no one knows, not even the angels of heaven, nor the Son, but the Father alone.”* Here He describes His second coming as a day even He does not know, as will no one except the Father in heaven until that day comes. There will be no signs we can read such as wars or rumors of wars. The day the Lord comes in judgment of all mankind is clearly intended to be unknown. The idea of Scripture is to warn man to make himself ready so he is prepared when it happens. That is the clear message of the Parable of the virgins in **Matthew 25:1-13**, which closes with the phrase, *“Be on the alert then, for you do not know the day nor the hour.* Peter tells us He will come as a thief in the night. *But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with*

intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up. (2 Peter 3:10) Paul then warns us to be ready, *But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day would overtake you like a thief; for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; so then let us not sleep as others do, but let us be alert and sober. (1 Thessalonians 5:4-6)*

Here we have used **Matthew 24** as an example of ideas men have concerning the message from God; ideas they have learned from men who have commented on the passage. But when one looks at the context of the discussion Jesus is having with His disciples, we can clearly see what the passage is teaching and its purpose. Jesus was giving information in the first part of the text to aid believers in escaping the horrors of the siege and destruction of Jerusalem by Rome. In the last half of the chapter He warns all men that a judgment is coming that cannot be escaped but one we can look forward to if we prepare for that day.

Other passages of Scripture are misunderstood by many for the very same reasons. We are listening to men rather than God. God revealed His will in a way we can understand for ourselves. This He expects of us and this we must do if we are to be prepared when the Lord returns.

Please listen to the Scriptures and not to what amounts to mythical ideas passed down through the generations.

Jim Stauffer

Respecting the Lord's Authority

We live in almost an anti-authoritarian time. "How dare my boss...!" "How dare the government...!" "How dare my parents...!" "How dare my spouse...!" All are commonly heard. What about when it comes to God and His authority? Do we try to justify our actions or make excuses? Many try. We can as well, if we're not careful. Consider these anti-authoritarian excuses people use to justify something not found in the Bible.

❖ **What's the big deal, anyway?** The big deal is: **"Whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3:17).** That does not mean we recite the name of the Lord after every action. It means we have to have the Lord's authority for everything we do. If we don't that means a.) We aren't walking by faith, and b.) We aren't following Christ.

❖ **He didn't say not to though, did He?** He didn't have to. I am reminded of some parents who had

a child that loved to draw on everything. They told their girl when they left one day, "Do not draw on the dresser, the tv, the walls, the windows, or your brother." They came back and she had pulled the sheets off her bed and covered them with doodling. Upon being reprimanded, the girl's response was: "You didn't tell me not to." We respect the silence of Scripture. We need to learn to, **"not think beyond what is written" (1 Cor 4:6).** We neither add nor take away.

❖ **But I think it's a good idea!** Have you ever had a good idea that in retrospect was a bad idea? Me too. Let the Lord come up with the good ideas. **"It is not in man who walks to direct his own steps" (Jeremiah 10:23).** **"There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death" (Proverbs 14:12).**

❖ **But everybody else is doing it!** Israel at one time wanted to **"be like all the nations" (1 Samuel 8:20).** They were to be a special people, but they just wanted to do what everybody else was doing. We are to be God's special people, and how should we be special? **"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed" (Romans 12:2).** We do not want to be like everyone else. The wisdom of man and false religion is just as strong a pull today as it was in the Greek and pagan times. A person does not have to respect the Lord's authority, but a person does not have to be saved either. God is the Judge, not us. If we are Christians, we must respect Christ's words and follow them: **"All authority has been given to Me... Go therefore and make disciples... teaching them to observe all things..." (Matt 28: 18-20)**

John Hines

Special Notices

The brethren at Lenexa and the family of **Jan Patrick** are saddened at the passing of sister Patrick this past Wednesday. She was a faithful member of the Lenexa church of Christ for some 35+ years. She and her benevolent attitude toward all will be greatly missed. There will be a visitation and funeral at Amos Funeral Home in Shawnee, Ks, Monday with the visitation beginning at 10 AM followed by the Funeral at 11 AM.

This Sunday, June 11, **Austin Byers** will be the speaker at our morning Bible Class, Sunday AM and PM services. We will have an opportunity to meet Austin, his wife Cami and their two children Denver and Indy. Austin is considering becoming the full time Evangelist at Lenexa. We encourage all to come and welcome him and hear what he has to say.

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

Sunday A.M. 9:30 Bible Study
Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship
Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship
Wednesday P.M. 7:00 Bible Study and Worship

Visitors welcome

We conduct in home Bible Studies

We offer Correspondence Courses

Evangelist and Editor Jim Stauffer

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Check out the following websites

facebook.com/LenexaChurchofChrist

lenexachurchofchrist.org

Elders:

Ron Peck
Jim Stauffer

Deacons:

Bill Miller
Troy Armstrong

NEWS AND NOTES:

THOSE IN NEED OF PRAYERS:

ALMA BAUMGARTNER, DENESE GORING, BROOKLYN BOYER, TRACY RICHARDSON, MATT BASSFORD, WAYNE MOODY, DAVID AND JOANNE BECKLEY, MARK WALKER, PAT MFCLOUD, PENNY STAUFFER AND ELLIE GOLDSTON.

Bible Classes: Sunday Morning
Prayer - Ron Peck

Wednesday Evening - **Minor Prophets - Jim Stauffer**

Sunday Sermon: **Seeking the Lost - Austin Byers** will preach for us Sunday as he interviews with us in consideration of full time work with Lenexa.



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10