

"For if the trumpet give an uncertain sound, who shall prepare himself to battle?" 1 Corinthians 14:8

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"Thus saith the Lord, Stand ye in the ways, and see, and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and ye shall find rest for your souls..." Jeremiah 6:16

Sounding Out The Faith February 2020



Scriptural Baptism



First of all, for baptism to be *Scriptural*, it must be according to the *Scriptures*. God's approval is given when it is according to His way, as shown to us in the Word. Man's ideas and traditions cannot enter into what constitutes *Scriptural* baptism. Let's consider what the *Scriptures* have to say.

"All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works." II Timothy 3:16-17

"And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully." II Timothy 2:5

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible. I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway." I Corinthians 9:24-27

Now we see that God will not reward any service or work that is not according to the *Scriptures*. Let us see what the Bible has to show us about *Scriptural* baptism.

The first thing to consider is that there must be a *Scriptural* candidate. The candidate for baptism must be someone that has been born again. They must have been made dead to sin by Jesus Christ. The candidate must be saved, believing the gospel

by faith with their heart.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Corinthians 5:17

"What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:1-6

"But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. And as they went on their way, thy came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Acts 8:12, 26-27

"And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and

all his, straightway." Acts 16:30-33

There must be a *Scriptural* purpose for the candidate to be baptized. First of all, their desire should be to qualify for membership in one of the Lord's, local, New Testament churches.

"Then they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls. And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers. And fear came upon every soul: and many wonders and signs were done by the apostles. And all that believed were together, and had all things common; And sold their possessions and goods, and parted them to all men, as every man had need. And they, continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, did eat their meat with gladness and singleness of heart, Praising God, and having favour with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily such as should be saved." Acts 2:41-47

The purpose should also be to declare Jesus to others by picturing the gospel of Jesus Christ in His burial and resurrection according to the *Scriptures*.

"The next day John seeth Jesus coming unto him, and saith, Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world. This is he of whom I said, After me cometh a man which is preferred before me: for he was before me. And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water. And John bare record, saying, I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it abode upon him. And I knew him not: but he that sent me to baptize

Continued on Page 2

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with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and remaining on him, the same is he which baptizeth with the Holy Ghost." John 1:29-33

The purpose should ultimately be to obey the Lord's command to every believer in the first step of obedience after salvation.

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Acts 2:38

"And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days." Acts 10:48

"And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Acts 22:16

"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." Galatians 3:27

Of course, for baptism to be *Scriptural*, it must be by immersion in water. The very word itself, *baptizo*, shows us that it must be immersion. The Greek word "*baptizo*" means to make whelmed, which means to make fully wet, engulf, submerge, or bury. All examples we have in the *Scriptures* are by immersion in water only.

"And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing." Acts 8:38-39

It would be good to note here that according to the *Scriptures* that the candidate and the administrator both went down into the water and both came up out of the water.

"And John also was baptizing in Aenon near to Salim, because there was much water there: and they came, and were baptized." John 3:23

"I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:" Matthew 3:11

"And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins." Matthew 3:6

Now we come to *Scriptural* authority for *Scriptural* baptism. The authority is Christ's that He then sent out His New Testament church to work under. The Lord's churches do not have their own authority. They are simply legislative bodies acting under the authority of Christ. The Lord's churches only have His authority to do

"whatsoever" He commanded, not what the "church" deems proper.

"Then the eleven disciples went away into Galilee, into a mountain where Jesus had appointed them. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubted. And Jesus came and spake unto them saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world. Amen." Matthew 28:16-20

"When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)" John 4:1-2

"And when he was come into the temple, the chief priests and the elders of the people came unto him as he was teaching, and said, By what authority doest thou these things? and who gave thee this authority? And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. The baptism of John, whence was it? From heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things." Matthew 21:23-27

Jesus did not relinquish His authority. He only sent His church, and ultimately later His churches as they reproduced, to work under His authority. Therefore, baptism and any other work done by a New Testament church must be done according to the *Scriptures* for God to approve, accept, or reward that work. After all, whose name, authority, is baptism administered under? It is under the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, not in the name, authority, of a local church.

Scriptural baptism requires a *Scriptural* administrator. *Scripturally*, we see every example in the *Scriptures* is a God-called, *Scripturally*, ordained bishop. Remember, the local church is not the administrator. They are simply the legislative body in charge of seeing that God's *Scriptures* are being followed in the ordinances. The local church is responsible to see that the administrator fits the requirements of the *Scriptures* and that he administers the ordinance of baptism according to "whatsoever I have commanded you".

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way

of the Lord, make his paths straight. And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him." Matthew 3:1-6, 13

"For even hereunto were ye called: because Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example, that ye should follow his steps:" I Peter 2:21

"Wherefore of these men which have companied with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection." Acts 1:21-22

"And he began to speak boldly in the synagogue: whom when Aquila and Priscilla had heard, they took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly." Acts 18:26

"When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. And when Paul had laid his hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied." Acts 19:5-6

Notice here in these Scriptures with Apollos that he was trying to baptize and do a work for God outside of the *Scriptures*. His work was not accepted by God, in fact it had to be done *Scripturally* by Brother Paul in order for God to approve. The evidence of God's approval was the gifts of the Holy Spirit being upon them after being baptized with a *Scriptural* administrator and organized with proper authority.

Consider if you will, Philip, the evangelist, which "*was*" one of the seven deacons. He had been ordained as a deacon in Acts chapter 6. Remember, the work of deacons was to relieve the Apostles so they could be devoted to study and ministering the Word. Notice if you will, in Acts 8, that Philip is leaving Jerusalem and doing the work of an ordained bishop. He is not staying in Jerusalem where the Apostles are to do the work of a deacon. At some point after being ordained as a deacon, God called him out to be a preacher and he was ordained to that work instead.

"Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. But Philip was found at Azotus: and passing through he preached in all the cities, till he came to Caesarea." Acts 8:5-6, 12, 40

"And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came into Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him." Acts 21:8

Qualifications of a Bishop

II Timothy 3:16-17 clearly teaches that God is the Author of the Bible. All Scripture being given by inspiration is clear that "God breathed in" the Scriptures to the writers. Those writers, by their own confession and evidence in "their" writings, were simply writing tools God used to pen His Word! (Jeremiah 1:1-9; Jeremiah 36:1-6; II Samuel 23:1-2) Having said that, we can conclude that what is written in the Bible comes from God and we would do well to take to heart His commands, teachings, and doctrines.

Let's consider what the Bible teaches concerning the office of bishop, pastor, in one of the Lord's New Testament churches. Consider, if you will, Titus 1:6-9. "[6] If any be blameless, the husband of one wife, having faithful children not accused of riot or unruly. [7] For a bishop must be blameless, as the steward of God; not selfwilled, not soon angry, not given to wine, no striker, not given to filthy lucre; [8] But a lover of hospitality, a lover of good men, sober, just, holy, temperate; [9] Holding fast the faithful word as he hath been taught, that he may be able by sound doctrine both to exhort and to convince the gainsayers."

First of all, look at the qualification of blameless. This word means "unaccused", coming from the Greek word meaning that a legal charge cannot be brought against him. This goes along with the qualification listed in I Timothy 3:7 that a bishop must have a good report of them which are without. Therefore, a bishop must be someone that is qualified by being a good steward in the Lord's church and in the community.

We will consider the qualification of being the husband of one wife at the end of this article. So for now, let's consider the conduct of his household. Here in verse 6 the Bible teaches us that a bishop must have his children in subjection. They cannot be the "town terrors", if you will. I Timothy 3:4-5 puts it this way, "[4] One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; [5] (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?)" Considering this qualification, if a man cannot manage or rule his children, he is not in a position to manage or rule one of God's, local, New Testament churches.

Next, we see the qualifications of not being self-willed, not soon angry. Self-willed simply means he is not to be self-pleasing or arrogant. Not soon angry means not irascible, or easily angered. It does not mean he doesn't get angry because the Bible says in Ephesians 4:26, "Be ye angry, and sin not...". However, a bishop must not be easily provoked to anger that will cause him to sin. He must have control of his emotions to deal with God's people the way that God would have him.

Now let's look at "not given to wine". This phrase in Greek means "not staying near wine", not tipping, not a toper. These old English words, simply put, mean one that does not drink alcohol. By the New Testament teachings and Old Testament examples, we understand that none of God's people should drink alcohol at all because of the position God has placed them in to teach and handle the Word of God. Therefore, if one is given to alcohol, they would pervert the judgments of God. (Proverbs 31:4-5)

The next qualification listed is "no striker". This means not a smiter or pugnacious. A bishop is not to be one that is quick to fight. Their position re-

quires restraint in order to deal with God's people.

Now we will consider not given to filthy lucre. This reveals that a bishop is not to be driven by gain, greed, or covetousness. His desire is to be for the spiritual welfare of the local church where God has put him, not financial gain.

"A lover of hospitality" and "a lover of good men" shows us that the office of bishop requires self-sacrifice and piety concerning the office. A pastor must be willing to have an open home and be selfless in his duties toward the local body where God has placed him. He must be one that loves virtue and purity, not one with a corrupt way of thinking.

The words "sober, just, holy, and temperate" all have to do with his self-control and being of morally upright behavior. This is a serious office-work and it must be taken seriously for a man to do the work God's way.

We can see in verse 9 of Titus 1, that a man is to be faithful, taught, and grounded in the doctrine. I Timothy 3:2,6 says, "[2] A bishop then must be blameless, the husband of one wife, vigilant, sober, of good behaviour, given to hospitality, apt to teach; [6] Not a novice, lest being lifted up with pride he fall into the condemnation of the devil." Acts 20:28 says, "[28] Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." This states clearly that a pastor's main job is to feed the local church. Seeing these verses together it is clear that the Lord's churches must be fed on the doctrine of God's Word, not the philosophies of man or man's ideas. This is why the qualification for a bishop is that he is not to be a novice, or an unlearned man.

Now we will consider the qualification of being a husband of one wife. These qualifications are equal in the matter of being required. However, this qualification is one, unlike the others, that cannot be changed. For the Bible is clear in Romans 7:2-3, "[2] For the woman which hath an husband is bound by the law to her husband so long as he liveth; but if the husband be dead, she is loosed from the law of her husband. [3] So then if, while her husband liveth, she be married to another man, she shall be called an adulteress: but if her husband be dead, she is free from that law; so that she is no adulteress, though she be married to another man." Of course, the same applies to the man as found in Matthew 5:31-32, "[31] It hath been said, Whosoever shall put away his wife, let him give her a writing of divorcement: [32] But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."

Divorce and remarriage is widely accepted today, but it is still condemned in the Bible. The family was the first institution that God made on this earth. He did not make one man and ten women or vice versa. He made one man and one woman and He said in Genesis 2:24, "[24] Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh." Then came allowances by man because of the hardness of hearts.

The Pharisees asked Jesus about divorce. Jesus said in Mark 10:5-9, "[5] And Jesus answered and said unto them, For the hardness of your heart he wrote

you this precept. [6] But from the beginning of the creation God made them male and female. [7] For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and cleave to his wife; [8] And they twain shall be one flesh: so then they are no more twain, but one flesh. [9] What therefore God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." Moses allowed the writing of divorcement because of the hardness of the people's heart, but it was not sanctioned or condoned by God. The only occasion for divorce and remarriage was for fornication that was discovered on the wedding night after a promise of virginity was made. That was the only occasion for divorce and remarriage recognized by God. Other than that, God says to remain unmarried if one divorces.

In Matthew 5:31, Luke 16:18, and I Corinthians 7:10-15 the Bible is clear that if a man divorces and remarries, he has committed adultery. In Romans 7:1-2 and I Corinthians 7:11 it is the same for a woman that divorces and remarries. This act of breaking the marriage covenant and entering into another marriage covenant is the act of adultery.

In Mark 6:14-28, the Bible says, "[14] And king Herod heard of him; (for his name was spread abroad:) and he said, That John the Baptist was risen from the dead, and therefore mighty works do shew forth themselves in him. [15] Others said, That it is Elias. And others said, That it is a prophet, or as one of the prophets. [16] But when Herod heard thereof, he said, It is John, whom I beheaded: he is risen from the dead. [17] For Herod himself had sent forth and laid hold upon John, and bound him in prison for Herodias' sake, his brother Philip's wife: for he had married her. [18] For John had said unto Herod, It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife." Notice here, that the Bible is clear that even after one is divorced and married to another, the first marriage covenant is still recognized. The same is true with the woman at the well in John 4:16-18. She had five husbands. All her marriages were identified. They were not removed, dissolved, or invalidated. They had been her husbands and Jesus still recognized all of them. In fact, in Romans 7 and I Corinthians 7, the divorced woman is to remain unmarried or be reconciled to her husband. Notice, God still recognizes him as her husband. A man who is divorced and remarried has, in fact, two living wives according to God's Word.

The husband of one wife qualification has been highly debated by those who would try to justify ordaining men to the office of bishop that have two or more living wives. The Greek word for one in Timothy and Titus dealing with these qualifications is "mia". This word means one, as one in particular. It never means one out of many or one as opposed to another. It is one in particular, as a one-woman man, remembering that the marriage covenant is until death. Therefore, if a man's wife dies, there is no longer a covenant. If a man is divorced and remarried, he has two women.

The physical relations between a man and a woman have nothing to do with the marriage covenant. Again, we can use the woman at the well. The man she was living with was not recognized by Jesus as her husband even though they had physical relations. However, the five men she had entered into a marriage covenant with, were recognized as her husbands. The physical relationship between a husband and wife does not constitute the covenant. In Matthew 1:24-25, the Bible says, "[24] Then Joseph being raised from sleep did as the angel of the Lord had bidden him, and took unto him his wife: [25] And knew her not till she had

(Qualifications of a Bishop—continued from Page 3)

brought forth her firstborn son: and he called his name JESUS." Joseph and Mary were married, husband and wife, and they did not have physical relations until after Jesus was born, but the Bible clearly states they were married.

God's Word is true and consistent in its qualifications for a bishop. It is true that they are all equal in importance and they must be met to be Scripturally ordained as a bishop. Some have said that the husband of one wife is the only qualification that is addressed at ordination services. However, a Scriptural ordination service will address all of these qualifications. The truth remains that only those that want to justify ordaining twice married preachers throw out these accusations. The truth is and remains that a man that has been divorced and remarried has two living wives and cannot fit the qualifications for being ordained or continuing in the office of bishop. The Bible is clear on this subject and in no way condones or allows for this practice no matter what the world's view is on this subject.

Two Ordinances of the Lord's New Testament Churches:

Baptism and the Lord's supper are the two ordinances given to the Lord's, local, New Testament churches. In I Corinthians 11:2, the Bible says, **"Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you."** God has given instructions specific for each of these ordinances and how they are to be administered and kept. These ordinances together picture the Gospel of Christ.

"Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand; By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain. For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:" I Corinthians 15:1-4

The Lord's Supper pictures the death of Christ according to the Scriptures.

"For as often as ye eat this bread, and drink this cup, ye do shew the Lord's death till he come." I Corinthians 11:26 **"And as they were eating, Jesus took bread, and blessed it, and brake it, and gave it to the disciples, and said, Take, eat; this is my body. And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins."** Matthew 26:26-28

The Lord's Supper must be kept according to the Scriptures in order for the Gospel to be pictured in truth. Pervert the Lord's Supper, and you pervert the Gospel.

In the new birth, a child of God has died to sin.

"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." John 3:3, **"Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord."** Romans 6:11

Their death to sin in their new creation is the declaration a born again, child of God is making when they submit to Scriptural baptism.

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." II Corinthians 5:17

Baptism pictures the burial of Christ according to the Scriptures. Baptism shows a death has taken place which then necessitates a burial.

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? 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." Romans 6:3-4

The resurrection is pictured in baptism. This is to picture that as a child of God submits to Scriptural baptism that they are ready to walk in that new life for the Lord in a New Testament church.

"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin." Romans 6:5-6

Some say that contending over doctrine is not important. They just want to see the gospel preached and the doctrines go by the wayside. However, according to the Scriptures, keeping the ordinances, the doctrines, and standing for the faith once delivered to the saints keeps the Gospel pure.

"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints." Jude 3