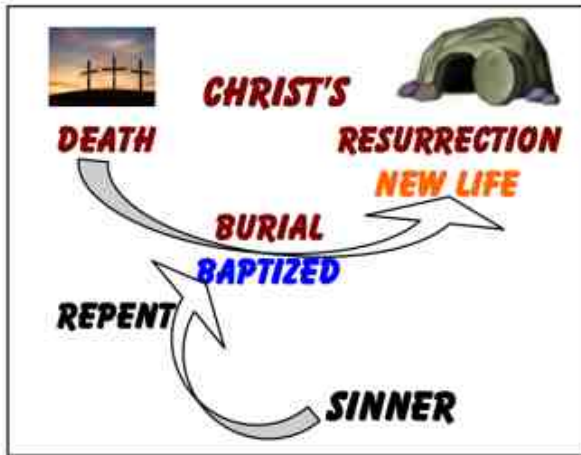


WHAT'S IN BAPTISM?



BY

JOHN T. POLK II

What's In Baptism?

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Question: What is in baptism?

There can only be one answer to this question. Since God brought up the subject in His Bible (the first use of the word is in the New Testament), it is only fitting to have Him answer the question using the same source. Jesus' question therefore is very relevant:

Are you not therefore mistaken, because you do not know the Scriptures nor the power of God?
(Mark 12:24)

When it comes to the matter of a soul's salvation, the Word of God should be the first, last, and the only authority to be heard. There are many contradictory "testimonies" concerning personal salvation, but none should be considered equal to the Bible, for God has said:

But he who glories, let him glory in the LORD. For not he who commends himself is approved, but whom the Lord commends.
(2 Corinthians 10:17-18)

Jesus Christ, after all, is the one who challenges us to put the importance of our soul in proper perspective when He said:

24 Then Jesus said to His disciples, 'If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow Me. 25 For whoever desires to save his life will lose it, but whoever loses his life for My sake will find it. 26 For what profit is it to a man if he gains the whole world, and loses his own soul?

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Or what will a man give in exchange for his soul?
([Matthew 16:24-26](#))

Each one of us is a living “soul” which we should not want to lose at any price, and we surely don't want to be misguided over what will happen to it. ***Many people put far more time, effort, and expense in selecting the right “insurance policy” for proper burial of their physical body than they do in selecting the right “assurance policy” that their soul is properly provided for forever.***

Why is it that people will accept what the Bible says about the soul's need for salvation and what the Bible says about the Savior who can save it, but not accept what the Bible says about what God wants them to do to save their soul through the Savior? This truly perplexing question was posed by the Savior, Himself, when He said:

43 I have come in My Father's name, and you do not receive Me; if another comes in his own name, him you will receive. 44 How can you believe, who receive honor from one another, and do not seek the honor that comes from the only God? ([John 5:43-44](#))

Jesus gave “His life for the sheep” ([John 10:11, 15](#)); surely He has told us what we must do to be the “sheep” who receive the benefits of His death ([John 10:14](#)). Regarding all of mankind, Jesus said:

My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me.” ([John 10:27](#))

If “My sheep” represent those who hear Jesus' voice and follow Him, then they are the “wise” Jesus described in His recorded sermon:

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21 Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. 22 Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' 23 And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' 24 Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine, and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock: 25 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it did not fall, for it was founded on the rock. 26 But everyone who hears these sayings of Mine, and does not do them, will be like a foolish man who built his house on the sand: 27 and the rain descended, the floods came, and the winds blew and beat on that house; and it fell. And great was its fall. ([Matthew 7:21-27](#))

Jesus distinguished those who follow Him from those who do not when He gave the following statement before He ascended to the throne of David:

15 And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. ([Mark 16:15-16](#))

“The gospel” is to be preached to “every creature” and each creature must make the decision whether or not to follow Jesus on His terms. Jesus’ statement is clear, concise, and

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commanding to those who hear Him, and it was consistently preached and obeyed throughout the rest of the New Testament.

When it comes to the subject of
“baptism,” however,
there is much confusion.

This confusion is not caused by God in His Word but by those who either misunderstand, ignore, or misrepresent His Word, for,

For God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints.”
(1 Corinthians 14:33)

The controversy over “baptism” is sharp, indeed, for it must be of vital interest to any and all who would be saved by the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

1. **SOME BELIEVE IT CAN SAVE BABIES**, who, without faith, repentance, or confession, are declared to be saved by water alone, **but that is the doctrine of “water salvation.”** The Bible, however, requires these pre-conditions to baptism (**Acts 18:8; Acts 2:38; 8:35-38**), and babies can decide to obey none of them.
2. **OTHERS BELIEVE IN SALVATION BEFORE THE ACT OF BAPTISM**, but this, too, is contrary to the order in Scripture (**Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16**). **People have even concocted a “sinner’s prayer”** that “God, for Christ’s sake, has forgiven me of my sins.”

There is no verse in the entire New Testament that words such a prayer for a sinner to pray. Regrettably, this oft- repeated statement has a sinner declaring his/her own sins forgiven, just like evil Pontius Pilate declared and then he ceremoniously washed his hands of the crucifixion ordeal (Matthew 27:24). When Jesus declared a man's sins were forgiven, He was rightly challenged with the thought that, "Who can forgive sins but God alone?" (Mark 2:5-7). Jesus, thus, was claiming the prerogative of God to forgive sins (Luke 7:47-48). But God, not the sinner, must declare sins forgiven. God has always reserved the authority to forgive sins for Himself; He has never given it to any man. The resurrected Christ,

22 breathed on them, and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained'. (John 20:22-23)

The Apostles never directly forgave anyone his/ her sins, but preached forgiveness through obedience to Jesus Christ. Paul preached Christ in Ephesus and corrected their confusion about baptism (Acts 19:1-7), but later told them it was "God in Christ [who, jtpII] forgave you." (Ephesians 4:32)

God never gave a "sinner's prayer" in His Bible, and those who have resorted to it have done so without authority from, or sanction of, God. In the New Testament, sinners who prayed were told to be baptized (Acts 9:11-18; 22:16; Acts 10:2, 48).

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John the Baptist came baptizing the Jews with “a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins” (Luke 3:3). Water baptism was a requirement “for the remission of sins” but since Jesus Christ was guilty of no sin (Hebrews 4:15), then John had to make an exception for Jesus to be baptized (Matthew 3:13-15; John 1:29-34). NO ONE THEN OR SINCE can be baptized “like Jesus.” To be baptized like Jesus, one’s sins would have to be forgiven *before* baptism, **but for everyone on earth except Jesus, John the Baptist and the Apostles of Jesus have placed baptism before “the remission of sins.”** (Luke 3:3; Acts 2:38)

John’s baptism was for Jews only, but water baptism in Jesus’ Gospel makes Christians “of all the nations” (Matthew 28:19; Acts 11:26).

3. **SOME THINK “BAPTISM” IS NON-ESSENTIAL TO A SOUL’S SALVATION.** The same Apostle Peter, whose Holy Spirit-inspired command to the first Jews converted by the Gospel of Jesus Christ after Jesus had been raised from the dead, placed baptism before their remission of sins (Acts 2:38). He also made baptism necessary to the salvation of the first Gentiles (Acts 10:48). Then, after reminding his readers that God saved Noah and his family “through water” (1 Peter 3:20) plainly declared:

There is also an antitype which now saves us— baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ. (1 Peter 3:21)

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Gospel baptism “saves,” “through water,” and one’s “good conscience toward God” should not be satisfied without it. One does not depend upon the water’s actual cleansing of the physical body (“not the removal of the filth of the flesh”), but it is the sinner’s faith in the power of God who raised Jesus Christ from the dead, that sins are forgiven when one is baptized into Christ (**Galatians 3:26-27**). It is just as Paul declared, that one is “buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with *Him* through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.” (**Colossians 2:12**)

According to Peter, the “antitype” shows that God saved Noah and his family by using the Flood water to separate them from the sinful world they were in and the cleansed world in which they began again. By the same token, the Gospel of Christ requires that a sinner appeal to God by obeying the Gospel of Jesus Christ with obedient faith and repentance from sins. But it is *after* baptism that God saves the sinner whose obedience has led up to and through water baptism to begin a new life. Not before, not until.

4. **SOME THINK “BAPTISM” IS THE FIRST ACT OF A CHRISTIAN LIFE**, but the Bible teaches that “baptism” is the last act of a sinner’s life. Paul expressed it thusly:

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His

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death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be 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 with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin. (Romans 6:1-7)

To “continue in sin” is to remain in the “old man,” “the body of sin.” Baptism is the break-away point by which a person severs himself/herself from their life of sin and begins anew. One’s decision to change “crucifies” their will to continue in sin, but baptism places one into the death of Jesus Christ for salvation to occur!

Only by baptism does the Bible say one has “been united together in the likeness of His death” and therefore permitted to rise to “walk in newness of life.”

If baptism is the first act of a Christian, then men have put it too late to do any good, for it is simply rite without “right.”

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For men to declare baptism has nothing to do with entering the death of Christ

- Denies the inspired Scripture of Paul,
- Means that those who follow their doctrine have not received the benefits of Christ's death and been saved!

God has placed baptism between a sinner and salvation by associating it with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Devil tells sinners they don't need it, or that it should be done after they are saved, or that baptism is the Devil's doctrine! And many have believed the Devil rather than God.

While Jesus lived on earth, He could pronounce forgiveness upon any sinner as He desired, for it showed Him to be God ([Luke 5:17-26](#); [7:36-50](#)). But His declarations to forgive sins were exceptions to the preaching rule requiring water baptism that John the Baptist, and then Jesus and His disciples had been preaching. Up to, and including, the "thief on the cross," Jesus Christ could forgive anyone their sins because He was "God in the flesh" ([Luke 3:3](#); [7:47-50](#); [Luke 23:39-43](#)). But once He died, His blood sealed the agreement to save sinners, so that "repentance and remission of sins should be preached" NOT "declared" ([Luke 24:46-48](#)).

Thereafter, never once at any time has Jesus Christ told anyone they were saved without obedience to the Gospel, which included baptism! Even Saul of Tarsus (later known as the Apostle Paul), to whom Jesus appeared on the road to Damascus, was told by Jesus how to be saved (or that he

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was already saved!). Jesus said to Saul, "Arise and go into the city, and you will be told what you must do" ([Acts 9:6](#)). In the city, Saul was told by Ananias, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" ([Acts 22:16](#)). Saul was still in his sins, so "he arose and was baptized" ([Acts 9:18](#)).

here Is A Scripture on "baptism" The Devil Fears

According to the Bible, the principle work of Satan (which name means, "Adversary") is to present alternative choice(s) to whatever God says is "righteous." The first example of this is in [Genesis 3](#) with Adam and Eve. God provided everything for them to live on the created Earth in pure, perfect happiness. ([Genesis 1:31](#))

In [Genesis 2:16-17](#), we read that "the LORD God commanded the man, saying, 'Of every tree of the garden you may freely eat; but of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil you shall not eat, for in the day that you eat of it you shall surely die.'" However, the serpent/adversary "said to the woman, 'You will not surely die. 'For God knows that in the day you eat of it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'" ([Genesis 3:4-5](#)) Eve sinned and gave to Adam, and he likewise sinned ([Genesis 3:6](#)). As a consequence, physical death, as God promised, with all the attendant illnesses, pain, suffering, sorrow and anguish, has been faced by the

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living (**Genesis 3:19; Romans 5:12-14; Hebrews 9:27-28**). *No one has ever inherited nor been guilty of Adam's sin*, but everyone is responsible for his/ her own sins (**Ezekiel 18:1-4, 20**). We all must live in the corrupted world as a consequence of Adam's sin.

Clearly the work of the Devil/Satan involves contradicting or corrupting God's Word in order to get humans to disobey or devalue that Word. In the Garden of Eden, Satan did both. In **Genesis 3:4-5**, he contradicted it by telling Eve there was no consequence to her action ("You will not surely die") and encouraged Eve to devalue it by saying that God was simply trying to keep her at a disadvantage ("For God knows...you will be like God").

Anyone who contradicts what God says, or gives people "reasons" for not accepting it "as it is in truth, the word of God, which also effectively works in you who believe," (**1 Thessalonians 2:13**) is of the Devil, under the influence of the Devil, or/ and is doing the work of the Devil. Hence, when Jesus predicted that his own death would occur in Jerusalem, Peter rebuked Him, whereupon "He turned and said to Peter, 'Get behind Me, Satan! You are an offense to Me, for you are not mindful of the things of God, but the things of men'" (**Matthew 16:21-23**). Peter was doing the work of the Devil with his "good intentioned" attempt to prevent Jesus' death.

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This helps us understand, then, that one of the most disturbing passages of Scripture to the Devil is

Mark 16:9-20:

9 Now when He rose early on the first day of the week, He appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom He had cast seven demons. 10 She went and told those who had been with Him, as they mourned and wept. 11 And when they heard that He was alive and had been seen by her, they did not believe. 12 After that, He appeared in another form to two of them as they walked and went into the country. 13 And they went and told it to the rest, but they did not believe them either. 14 Later He appeared to the eleven as they sat at the table; and He rebuked their unbelief and hardness of heart, because they did not believe those who had seen Him after He had risen. 15 And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned. 17 And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; 18 they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover.' 19 So then, after the Lord had spoken to them, He was received up into heaven, and sat down at the right hand of God. 20 And they went out and preached everywhere, the Lord working with them and confirming the word through the accompanying signs. Amen.

The Devil has waged a furious battle to keep this passage from having any significance to sinners. It is a forthright statement of the Gospel of Jesus Christ that can save a soul and also strengthen faith in the inspired Word of God.

Satan offers:

1. **THAT IT DOES NOT BELONG IN THE BOOK OF MARK,** claiming that, “some manuscripts omit this ending of Mark.”
 - a. A main manuscript that omits it leaves a space precisely large enough for these verses before beginning the Book of **Luke**, thus indicating that the scribes were aware that it belonged but that at the time of their copying Scripture, they didn't have the manuscript that contained these verses before them.
 - b. There are plenty of manuscripts of the Bible that do contain these verses to indicate they should be included.
 - c. **Mark 16:8** is worded in such a way that no one would believe it is a proper ending to such a biography. It is anticipatory, rather than conclusive: “So they went out quickly and fled from the tomb, for they trembled and were amazed. And they said nothing to anyone, for they were afraid.” The Books of **Matthew**, **Luke** and **John** do not end in such a tentative fashion, and it would be uncharacteristic for Mark's account of Christ's life to finish in this manner.
 - i. **Matthew 28:20** has: “Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

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- ii. **Luke 24:52-53** says: “And they worshiped Him, and returned to Jerusalem with great joy, and were continually in the temple praising and blessing God. Amen.”
- iii. **John 21:24-25** contains: “This is the disciple who testifies of these things, and wrote these things; and we know that his testimony is true. And there are also many other things that Jesus did, which if they were written one by one, I suppose that even the world itself could not contain the books that would be written. Amen.”

Each account finishes with the full assurance that Jesus would be working with the disciples in the near future so that Scripture might be completed. Mark's ending (**verses 9-20**) shows that the miracles would be used until they were written down in the Scriptures themselves, for once the word was confirmed, the miracles would cease being done, but never have ceased being read (**Hebrews 2:1-4; Jude 3; John 17:20**).

Those who have accepted that **Mark 16:9-20** should not be considered as “Scripture” have been tempted, like Eve, to deny that what is the Word of God should not be believed:

But I fear, lest somehow, as the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness, so your minds may be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he who comes preaches another Jesus whom we have not preached, or if you

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receive a different spirit which you have not received, or a different gospel which you have not accepted--you may well put up with it!
(2 Corinthians 11:3-4)

2. **THAT JESUS' PHYSICAL BODY WAS NOT REALLY RAISED FROM THE DEAD.** He had been physically buried (Matthew 27:57-60; Mark 15:42-47; John 19:48-52). The evidence shows remarkably that He was bodily raised from the dead:
- a. His physical body appearances to Mary Magdalene (Matthew 28:1-9; Luke 24:1-11; John 20:1-2, John 11-18), two disciples (Luke 24:13-35), and the rest of the Apostles and many disciples (Luke 24:36-43; John 20:19-29; 21:1-14; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8), are documented by the other New Testament writers, so this mention places Mark's account in line with their eyewitness testimonies to Jesus' physical resurrection.
 - b. The soldiers who guarded the tomb were given a false explanation (and a "large sum of money") to account for the disappearance of His physical body (Matthew 28:1-4, 11-15). Unless His body was gone, this was totally unnecessary!
 - c. The disciples searched the tomb but found no physical body of Jesus (Luke 24:1-8; John 20:2-8).
 - d. The Devil is a liar and no truth is in him (John 8:44). The mere fact that he continues to present "new findings" that question or deny Jesus' resurrection proves that the Devil, at least, must believe that Jesus was bodily raised, for he would only deny the truth!

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Those who have accepted the notion that Jesus Christ was not bodily raised from the dead have been tempted, like Eve, to contradict a limitation imposed by God's Word. People thus contradict the eyewitnesses to Jesus' resurrection (**John 20:26-28**), but without a shred of evidence that it was otherwise. They have also rejected God's testimony that Jesus Christ is the Son of God:

Paul, a bondservant of Jesus Christ, called to be an apostle, separated to the gospel of God which He promised before through His prophets in the Holy Scriptures, concerning His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, who was born of the seed of David according to the flesh, and declared to be the Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead. (**Romans 1:1-4**)

3. **THAT BAPTISM HAS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING WHATEVER TO DO WITH SAVING A SOUL FROM SIN.**

- a. ***Jesus says it does.*** In **Mark 16:16**, baptism is placed in Jesus' sentence after believing but before salvation. Why is this so? *If Jesus had felt baptism had nothing whatever to do with salvation, He would have:*
 - i. *Left it out altogether;*
 - ii. *Mentioned it after salvation;*
 - iii. *Specifically said that it had nothing whatever to do with salvation;*
 - iv. *Warned His disciples that it was a contradiction of God's other commandments.*

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- b. ***Jesus clearly did not leave it out, but many preachers do.*** All who leave out what Jesus placed in the message of salvation, thus, are of the Devil. Jesus chastised the Pharisees, scribes, and lawyers who “have taken away the key of knowledge. You did not enter in yourselves, and those who were entering in you hindered.” (Luke 11:44-46, 52) *No preacher has preached the saving grace of Jesus Christ who has, without authority from God, left out the baptism that Jesus clearly placed before salvation.*
- c. ***Jesus' words are in exactly the order that He gave them,*** and that is why this verse, Mark 16:16, must be voided by the Devil. To demonstrate Jesus' meaning, ***there is not one passage of Scripture where baptism and salvation/ remission of sins are mentioned together that places salvation before baptism.*** All of the New Testament writers, guided by the Holy Spirit (2 Timothy 3:16-17), wrote on the subject in complete accord with Jesus Christ.

Don't let a preacher deceive you by quoting all the verses that mention “faith” and “grace” and point out that “baptism is not in them, and therefore nonessential.” **Verses that do not contain a subject obviously should not be used to cancel what the Bible says about that subject in other passages.** For instance, Mark 16:16 does not mention: “repentance” but Acts 2:38 does; nor does it mention “confession” but Acts 8:35-39 does; nor does it mention paying a preacher, but

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1 Corinthians 9:13-14 and **2 Corinthians 11:8-9** do teach those who have been baptized that they should.

Baptism puts a sinner into the death of Christ and, for the first time, to arise as one with Christ (**Romans 6:3-6**). If salvation comes to a sinner without being baptized into Jesus' death in order to obtain remission of sins, then, as far as their "salvation" is concerned, "Christ died in vain." (**Galatians 2:21**) ***All those who have thought they were saved by Jesus without being baptized have followed a "faith only" fallacy that makes their Christian living a "vain" or empty offering to God!*** All who are saved by Jesus must believe and be baptized as Jesus says.

No preacher has preached the saving faith of Jesus Christ who has, without authority from God, rearranged the order of obedience to Jesus' gospel, and placed baptism after salvation.

- d. ***Nowhere in Scripture does Jesus ever claim that baptism has nothing whatever to do with salvation.*** John the Baptist preached to the Jews a baptism in "water unto repentance," and Jesus, who needed no repentance, insisted upon being baptized (**Matthew 3:1-17**). Though the exception to the rule, Jesus obeyed God's command of water baptism! After He was crucified for our sins, and raised from the dead, Jesus completely authorized and necessitated water baptism for all who would

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be saved through His death (**Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:15-16**). The Apostles, with complete authority by the name of Jesus Christ, insisted that sinners must be baptized for the remission of sins in order to receive salvation from Christ (**Acts 2:38; 10:47-48; 8:35-39; 19:1-7**).

The “thief on the cross” (Luke 23:32-43) dealt with Jesus before He died, and therefore whatever Jesus said to him cannot cancel out the order of the resurrected Lord to “every creature.”

(**Mark 16:15-16**) None of the writers of the New Testament ever taught against the necessity of baptism for sinners, for the Gospel of Jesus Christ will never be changed with authorization from God (**Matthew 28:18-20; 1 Corinthians 15:1-8; Galatians 1:6-9**).

No preacher has preached the saving love of Jesus Christ who has, without authority from God, denied the necessity of water baptism for the remission of sins.

- e. **Nowhere did the New Testament writers teach or claim that baptism contradicts other passages of Scriptures.** Peter obviously did not think it contradicted any passage dealing with “works,” or “grace,” or “love,” or “faith” because he said that: “There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism” (**1 Peter 3:21**). Peter is saying baptism is the point of salvation for a sinner’s obedience. God saves a sinner “not according to

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our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began" (2 Timothy 1:9).

Works of the sinner's devising avail nothing, but obedience to whatever God commands does! Salvation is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit" (Titus 3:5). God saves a sinner "through the washing of regeneration" which He authorizes (Matthew 28:18-20). Does God contradict Himself? Absolutely not, for "God is not the author of confusion but of peace, as in all the churches of the saints." (1 Corinthians 14:33)

Whatever "works" God does condemn in His Word, are not the works of obedience to His Word. Paul thanked God for the Thessalonians' "work of faith" after they responded to their "election by God" (1 Thessalonians 1:2-4). Was he wrong to do so? Using one Scripture to contradict the plain teaching of another Scripture is the very thing Jesus condemned the Pharisees for doing (Matthew 15:1-9), for they were transgressing and nullifying the commandment of God and, thus, worshiping God "in vain." Those who have accepted that Mark 16:9-20 should not be considered as "Scripture" have been tempted like Eve, to remove a part of God's inspired Word as though it was unimportant.

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No preacher has preached the saving obedience to Jesus Christ who has, without authority from God, made water baptism for the remission of sins appear to contradict any other reference to salvation.

4. **THAT THE EARLY CHURCH OF CHRIST VOTED ON AND DECIDED DOCTRINE(S) AS THEY DEEMED NECESSARY.** The facts of Jesus death, burial, and resurrection can never be changed. The sinner's response to those facts can never be changed. The disciples' preaching about Jesus' salvation offer and a sinner's obedience can never be changed. The limited use of miracles to substantiate the preached message and their inclusion in the written New Testament can never be changed.

In **Mark 16:9-20**, the disciples were slow to believe that Jesus' promise to be raised from the dead had actually happened, which shows all readers that they were not ignorantly excited but reasonably convinced. Theirs was not a "whitewater" faith, but a deep river of strong conviction. There is nothing in Scripture to show they ever "took a vote" to decide anything doctrinally different from "the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints" (Jude 3). **THERE IS NO "SINNER'S PRAYER" ANYWHERE IN THE WORD OF GOD!**

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The Devil is hard at work
denying any association of baptism
with salvation.

Do not let Satan take away the proper ending of the Gospel of Mark that God has sown in your heart (cf [Mark 4:14-15](#)). ***Do not think that obeying a "religious person's" commands will be honored by God.*** But even now, while your understanding of God's Word burns in your heart, what hinders you from being baptized? ([Acts 8:35-39](#)). Make today the day of your salvation.

----- **John T. Polk II**

All Scriptures and comments, unless otherwise noted, are based on the New King James Version.

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