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What to Tell Those Who Do Not Believe in Baptism

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Many religious people today deny the essentiality of baptism. *"We are saved by faith only"* is the popular cry in religious circles. It is said that baptism is a work and that we are not saved by works; thus, baptism is not necessary.

First, the Bible does not teach that no work is involved in our salvation. It teaches that we are not saved by a particular kind of work, namely, meritorious works or works of the law. One need only read the second chapter of James to see clearly that works of faith have a part in a person's salvation.

Second, one would be hard-pressed to find any passage that says we are saved by faith only. The truth is that the Scriptures teach the very opposite (James 2:24).

What can we tell people who are adamant that baptism is not necessary? To be sure, in some cases, nothing can be said that will convince an individual of the truth on this matter. Some have made up their minds, not because of what the Bible teaches, but because of what a favorite preacher or teacher has said so often. A person will not listen to reason when he has elevated man's word above or equal to God's Word.

There are, however, some approaches that can be used with some success. One approach I often use is simply telling people what baptism does. If what baptism accomplishes is essential, then baptism itself must be essential. Most people, or at least many people, can see the logic in this. So, what should we tell people who deny the importance of baptism?

Tell Them That Baptism Puts One into Christ

That baptism puts one into Christ can be easily established. Paul said, *"For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"* (Galatians 3:27). Romans 6:3 teaches the same. Whatever blessings are secured in Christ, one thing is certain: baptism puts us into Christ.

It might be helpful to list the blessings we have in Christ. Here are a few of them:

- **Salvation (2 Timothy 2:10)**
- **No Condemnation (Romans 8:1)**
- **Hope in Death (Revelation 14:13)**
- **Reconciliation with God (2 Corinthians 5:18)**
- **Access to God by One Spirit [Ephesians 2:18]**

Be sure to point out that all these spiritual blessings are in Christ (Ephesians 1:3). If one refuses to be baptized, he refuses all the blessings that are found in Christ, because, according to Scripture, baptism is what places us there.

Tell Them That Baptism Puts One into the Kingdom of God

Jesus taught Nicodemus that one must be born again to enter the kingdom of God (John 3:1-5). Is baptism part of being born again? Jesus said it is. One must be born of water. What else could water refer to but baptism? Once it is established that baptism helps one become a citizen of the kingdom of God, it is worth noting the significance of being in the kingdom. Paul said that when the end comes, Jesus will deliver the kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24).

What happens to those who are not in the kingdom? Obviously, they will not be saved. There are only two places where one might spend eternity – heaven or hell. If one is not delivered to the Father to spend eternity in heaven, hell will be his destination. But who is it that will be delivered to the Father? Those in the kingdom. And how does one enter the kingdom? The answer is by being born again of the water and of the Spirit, which involves baptism. The one who refuses to be baptized will never enter the kingdom. Therefore, he will not be delivered to God when the end comes.

Tell Them That Baptism Puts One into Contact with the Blood of Christ

One should not need much convincing to see how important the blood of Christ is. It is by the blood of Christ that we receive the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 26:28), and they are washed away (Revelation 1:5). But how and when do we contact the blood of Christ?

We must be baptized into our Lord's death (Romans 6:3). We figuratively come into contact with the blood of Christ when we are baptized. How do we know this? Because baptism does for us the same thing that the blood of Christ does. Read Acts 2:38 and Acts 22:16. You will find that the forgiveness of sins, or having one's sins washed away, is attributed to both baptism and the blood of Christ. Why does baptism do for us the same thing that the blood of Christ does? It is because in baptism we come into contact with the blood. When one refuses to be baptized, he remains in sin.

These arguments will not convince everyone that baptism is necessary for salvation, but reasonable people can see its importance once they understand what it does. Next time someone denies that baptism is necessary, just show them what it does and see what they think. 12/21/25 Brown Street Beacon Akron, OH