

Doctrine of Water Baptism and Salvation

If...

1. If water baptism is needed for salvation than the teaching of the Catholic Church is correct and there was, and is, no need for the Protestant Reformation. *Sola fide* (by faith alone), is at the heart of the Reformed Doctrine of Justification.
 - *Romans 1:17 For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith: as it is written, The just shall live by faith.*
 - *Romans 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.*

2. If water baptism is needed for salvation then Catholic Dogma of works, plus faith resulting in salvation is correct, and passages such as Ephesians 2:8-9 is overthrown. *“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.”*

3. If water baptism is needed for salvation then the Law need never have been abolished for a new set of laws have simply replaced the old ones. Christ can no longer say, *“It is finished”*. Something more must yet be done in addition to Calvary. Water baptism must be administered to complete redemption.

4. If water baptism is needed for salvation then the great parallel between Moses and Christ illustrating and emphasizing faith, is made void.
 - *John 3:14 And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up: 15 That whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life.*

5. If baptism is necessary for salvation then the misguided practice of the early church whereby individuals delayed being baptized until near death is justified. But what does the Bible say about baptism? It exhorts an immediate obedient response to the gospel. Baptism is to be done sooner rather than later.
 - *Acts 8:36 And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 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 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.*
6. If water baptism is needed for salvation than another foundation is laid on which faith rests.
- *1 Corinthians 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.*
7. If water baptism is needed for salvation then a good work has been added to the atoning work of Christ, and the heart is left to wonder and worry about other good works to be enacted in order to be saved. The end result will be nothing but fear and despair, for who can merit the merits of Christ?
- *Galatians 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. 24 Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. 26 For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.*
8. If water baptism is essential for salvation then the importance of the Spirit baptism is reduced.
- *Galatians 3:27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.*
 - *1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.*
9. If water baptism is essential for salvation then Jesus did not really forgive sins as the Scriptures teach.
- *Luke 5:20 And when he saw their faith, he said unto him, Man, thy sins are forgiven thee.*
 - *Luke 8:48 And he said unto her, Daughter, be of good comfort: thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace.*
10. If water baptism is essential for salvation then all the Old Testament saints of faith mentioned in Hebrews 11 are lost for none were baptized for salvation.

Conclusion

The doctrine of baptismal regeneration is intrinsically illogical. The Church of Christ teaches that a person cannot fully believe unless they are baptized. This means that the Church of Christ minister baptizes an unbeliever. A person goes into the baptismal pool an unbeliever but emerges a believer. To baptize an unbeliever in order to make him a believer is not a Biblical teaching.

The only proper candidate for baptism is the person who believes in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour. The gospel pattern was established by Jesus and honored by the apostles. First disciples are to be made, and then the disciples are to be baptized.

- *John 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.*
- *Acts 8:37 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 13:39 And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the Law of Moses.*
- *Acts 16:31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house.*
- *1 John 5:1 Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God: and every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him.*

While water baptism is not essential for salvation, it is essential for gospel obedience. The Lord Jesus Christ made this outward ritual of an inward reality of faith to be the first act of obedience.

- *Matthew 28:18 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.*