## 5 Views of Baptism: What View Do You Hold?

Jesus stated nearly 2000 years ago, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mk. 16:16). To the simple, unbiased and unprejudiced mind, Jesus' statement is very clear and easy to understand. It is as easy to understand a doctor's statement, "He who eats his food and digests it will live; but he who does not eat will die." All of us would easily understand that unless we eat and digest, we will die! However, for those who have allied themselves with human creeds and have been depraved with worldly wisdom, Jesus' simple statement becomes confusing and contradicting. Although the Bible ALWAYS places water baptism (in Jesus' name) before salvation, men have sought ways to undermine His authority and confuse the simplicity of our Lord's teaching.

### ATHEIST'S VIEW

For example, the Atheist would say, "He who believes and is baptized will NOT be saved." He has rejected the existence of God and the authority of the Bible. Unbelievers believe there is no God, yet one would have to be "God" himself to prove such a position. For one to know that there is no God, he would have had to have been everywhere, seen everything at once and know all things! Yet Jesus had him in mind when he said, "…he who believes not shall be condemned," and again, "…he who does not believe is condemned already" (Jn. 3:18). Truly "the fool has said in his heart 'There is no God'" Psa.14:1).

### UNIVERSALIST'S VIEW

The Universalist approaches the scripture with the bias that God is a God of only love and therefore He can never condemn anyone. They say, "He who believes NOT and is NOT baptized shall be saved." While such a faith accepts the actuality of God, it rejects His word and leaves, nonetheless, a corrupt and misguided picture of Deity. Warning! "He who rejects Me, and does not receive My words, has that which judges him—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day" (Jn. 12:48).

### CATHOLIC'S VIEW

The Catholic comes along and teaches, "He who believes NOT and is baptized shall be saved." I say this as a former Catholic who was sprinkled as a baby. Catholics baptize babies because of the erroneous view of inherited sin (Ezek. 18:20); however, Bible baptism was NEVER administered to babies. Jesus taught that babies are safe(Lk. 18:15-17). Notwithstanding, subjects of Bible baptism must have first believed (see again Mark 16:16), yet faith comes by hearing the word of the Lord (Rom. 10:17). How can a baby believe when they cannot understand the word of the Lord? Can they also confess with their mouth the Lord Jesus (Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9, 10; Acts 8:37)? False doctrine makes us believe unbelievable things!

### PROTESTANT'S VIEW

Then the Baptist comes and says, "He who believes and is NOT baptized shall be saved." Yet is this what Jesus said? Is it Deity's view? No amount of human manipulation will change the eternal truth of Mark 16:16. Beware all of these "NOTS" are formulated by men in the devil's "tale" to cheat your soul!

### JESUS' VIEW

"He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned" (Mk. 16:16).

*- by Steven J. Wallace*

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## The Fundamentals

It's impossible to accomplish some things in life until we have mastered the fundamentals. Any sports coach will tell you that a great team has to first be grounded in the fundamentals. Teachers will tell you the same thing about successful students – and the same thing is true about Christians. The fundamentals – the "first principles" – are not always the most enjoyable

part, but they are the most essential part of what we need to learn. If we don't, we may very well be characterized by these words – "For when for the time ye ought to be teachers, ye have need that one teach you again which be the first principles of the oracles of God; and are become such as have need of milk, and not of strong meat. For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil." (Hebrews 5:12-14).

May we be well-grounded in the fundamentals so we can grow up to enjoy the "solid food" found in God's word.

*- by Allen Smith*

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## Don't Follow That Link!!!

*"It happened, late one afternoon, when David arose from his couch and was walking on the roof of the king's house, that he saw from the roof a woman bathing; and the woman was very beautiful"* (2 Samuel 11:2 ESV).  You know the rest of the story.

King David's actions at the outset of this well-known and sad event seem innocent enough. We don't know, but could speculate that he was seeking relief from a cool evening breeze at the end of a potentially stressful day as head-of-state.  For whatever reason, he is on the roof and his view falls upon a beautiful woman nearby in a compromising situation.  Now he has choices: look away, or linger on the scene; forget the matter, or pursue the evil thought that the sight has just generated.  David chose wrong, and his life was never the same thereafter.

A young man is scanning the Internet.  He has no evil intention.  Hunting, or fishing, or football – these are the things on his mind.  With smart phone in hand or a computer screen in his face, he clicks from one site to another.  But suddenly an ad 'pops up'.  A scantily clad woman, whose attire leaves little to the imagination, is right there in front of his eyes.  What will he do?  A simple click on the provided link will lead to all sorts of filthy and immoral images.  One thing can (and usually does) lead to another – and another – and another.  The 'addiction' to pornography that we hear about so often is now plaguing him.  He can't seem to get enough.  Ultimately 'viewing' is not sufficient and he begins to 'act out' on his passion.  Sadly, a modern version of King David's tragedy has just been repeated.

Jesus said: *". . . everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart"*  (Matthew 5:28). Don't follow that link!  Think!

*- by Greg Gwin*