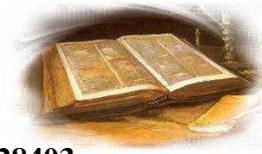


# The Examiner



Published by the Winter Park church of Christ  
Meeting at: 2122 Market Street; Wilmington NC 28403  
www.winterparkcocnc.com

Vol. 8, No. 11

Edited by John Cripps

June 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

## Comparing Baptisms - by Kenneth E. Thomas

Of all Bible subjects, perhaps none has been debated more than has the subject of Baptism. Who should be baptized? When should one be baptized? How does one go about obeying this command? What is the design or purpose in Bible baptism? Into what does baptism place one? I suggest that the New Testament answers very simply each of the above.

### Who Should Be Baptized?

There is a common practice among various denominations of “baptizing” infants. This practice was not engaged in by the first century disciples of Christ. It is without scriptural authority. Children have no sins and the gospel plan of salvation given in the “great commission” excludes them because it says, “. . . go teach . . . baptize and teach them to observe all that I have commanded you” (**Matt. 28:19-20**). In Mark’s account of this commission he says, “. . . he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (**Mk. 16:16**). Again we see the prerequisites cannot be met by one

not old enough to be taught and incapable of believing! Peter told believers to repent and be baptized (**Acts 2:38**). So, in this passage, we see repentance must precede baptism in Christ’s scheme of redemption and again an infant or one mentally incapable of meeting the requirements prior to baptism is not a fit subject for baptism. When the treasurer of Queen Candace of Ethiopia was taught Jesus, he requested baptism at the hands of Philip the evangelist to which Philip replied, “If you believe you may.” To which he answered, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.” Upon this confession made with the mouth, they both went down into the water and he baptized him (**Acts 8:26-39**). An infant cannot make the confession required (**Rom. 10:10; Acts 8:37; 1 Tim. 6:13**). Some say they believe that a “saved person” is who should be baptized, but Scriptures say that the alien sinner is the one commanded to be baptized (**Acts 2:38; 1 Pet. 3:20-21**).

### When?

One’s attitude toward this command of Christ may be seen by the urgency or lack of the same in people’s minds relative to baptism. Some claim one is saved before and without obedience to this command and they later set a date for the baptizing ceremony. These folks believe that if they never get around to baptizing one, he is still heaven bound having “accepted Christ as his personal Savior.” Don’t they know that since these same people also claim that one is baptized into a local congregation of that particular denominational fellowship, that they are thereby not only missing the scriptural boat on baptism, but admitting that one is saved before membership in “their denomination,” thereby admitting that it can’t possibly be the New Testament church? You see, the same thing that saves one (the blood of Christ) in gospel obedience also places him in the church which Christ’s blood purchased (**Acts 2:38,41,47**). One is not baptized into the local church, not even into a local church of Christ. One is baptized into the one body which is the church universal, and must later “join” himself to a local congregation (**1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 2:13-16; Acts 9:19-20,26-28**).

The fact that the examples we have of people obeying this

command illustrate that they did it as soon as was possible shows the importance placed on baptism. On Pentecost for example, “they therefore that gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them” (**Acts 2:41**). In the case of the queen’s treasurer they stopped the chariot and both went down into the water and he baptized him there on the Gaza Strip (**Acts 8:38-39**). The jailor in Acts 16 and his entire household were baptized after having been taught and that past midnight (**Acts 16:30-33**). One other example is that of Saul of Tarsus who was told, “. . . why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins – – .” (**Acts 22:16**). I just wonder why all the rush to be baptized if, like we are so often told by religionists of varying stripes, it is just an “outward sign of an inward grace” or “a way we show (confess) to the world we have accepted Christ.” You see, sectarians believe you can be saved and never be baptized as we have said. Proof is their doctrinal credal statements and their running to the thief on the cross when this subject is under discussion. See **Hebrews 9:15-17**.

### How?

Our next question comes over the diversity in the “how to” concerning baptism? Really, there

is no such thing as a “mode” of baptism. Baptism is only one action. The meaning of the word translated baptize is to immerse. Baptize is a verb denoting only that action of immersion. To say that one may be baptized by sprinkling or pouring of water over the candidate is about as silly as saying that one may walk by flying. But again we apply the wording of Scripture and see the truth of this. Philip and the treasurer went down “both” into the water and came “up out of” the water. Paul in **Romans 6:3-4 and Colossians 2:12** refers to baptism as a burial and a resurrection. Such terms cannot be properly applied to other actions called baptism. I should add that the Spirit through Paul also said that there is only “one baptism” valid today (**Eph. 4:5**).

### Baptism’s Purpose?

Paul reminded the Romans how the blood of Christ was connected to their conversion and how they had been obedient to a form of Christ’s death, His burial and His resurrection in obeying Him in baptism as taught in the Scriptures (**Rom. 6:1-6,16-18**). If we had no other Scripture to study, we would be forced to conclude that baptism was to reach the benefits of Christ’s blood and that it is “into Christ.” Since all spiritual blessings are in Christ (**Eph. 1:3**), and one as a penitent believer is to

be immersed into Christ where these blessings are located it shouldn’t take much to see that baptism is essential to one’s salvation from alien sins!

### Scriptural Baptism Is Into The Name of Christ

That’s correct, “scriptural baptism” is into the name of Christ. Really every baptism practiced is into some name. Example: if one is baptized into the Baptist church, he then wears the name Baptist. If one is baptized by a Methodist preacher into the Methodist church, he then begins wearing the name Methodist. Each of the above says one is saved before submitting to “their baptism.” This proves that since one according to them is saved outside of “their church” and without taking on “their name,” “their church,” as well as “their name,” are unnecessary to one’s salvation. Of course those who understand God’s plan of salvation know that salvation is “in Christ” and “in the one body” and “in the name of Christ” (**Rom. 6:34; Gal. 3:26-27; 1 Cor. 12:13; Acts 4:11-12; 1 Cor. 1:10-12; Eph. 1:3**).

### Scriptural Baptism Unites; Others Divide

**CATHOLIC:** Baptism = Salvation + Belief. Wear name Roman Catholic.

**BAPTIST:** Belief = Salvation +

Baptism. Wear the name Baptist.

The Bible Position: Hear, Believe, Repent, Confess Christ, Baptism= Salvation (**Mk. 16:15-16; Rom. 10:9-17; Acts 2:36-38,41,47; Matt. 28:18-20; Rom. 6:3-5; Gal. 3:26-29; 1 Cor. 1:10-12; 1 Pet. 3:20-21**). Then wear the name Christian (**Acts 4:11-12; 1 Pet. 4:16; Acts 26:28; 11:26; 1 Cor. 1:10-12**).

So you can plainly see from the above that if folks would be content to just follow the Bible’s teaching, the alien sinner, upon confession of faith in Christ, would submit to immersion into Christ for the forgiveness of past sin and error. The Lord will add him to the one body, the church, and he will be united with all others of like precious faith as the Lord Himself prayed we should be (**John 17:17-20,21**). See? Isn’t it simple? Only the baptism of the New Testament has the ability to unite; denominational so-called baptisms can only divide and cannot be scriptural (**2 John 9-11; Gal. 1:6-10; Rev. 22:18-19; John 12:48; Matt. 7:21-23**).

### Where Are You?

In the light of the preceding, “where are you?” to use the words of God to Adam in the long ago. What about your baptism? Was it in keeping with the principles set forth in this article from God’s word or was it like the sectarian baptisms! Your eternal destiny is at stake! You cannot afford to be mistaken or to take any chances! Why not humbly submit to what you know is true and cannot possibly be wrong and with thankfulness stand upon the solid ground of eternal truth a free man or woman under Christ? Where are you spiritually right now? Where will you be in eternity? \*\*\*\* Via - Guardian of Truth XXX: 18, pp. 547-548 September 18, 1986\*\*\*\*

