

Elementary Doctrines Baptism in Water

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In our discussion of “Baptisms” we reaffirmed this fact that the elementary doctrines are not without importance, they are not insignificant. The very term “elementary” tends to put you off from believing that these are some things you have to “get”. I told the story once, on an occasion when I was having a Bible study and I was going around the room asking people to read and this older fellow, when we came to him, he said, “Well, I don’t have my glasses.” And so we just skipped over and went to the next person. Well later he came up to me and he said, “You know, I have to confess that really what was going on was not that I had forgotten my glasses.” He said, “I can’t read.” And then he told me the story of how, as a child, he couldn’t go to school because he had to work, and because of that—not having gone to elementary school—he never learned to read. In many respects we are finding God’s people, who have grown older in terms of numerical age, but have no strength, no understanding in the things of God because they were never taught, as new converts, the basic things.

Now it is a mistake to think that the only ones involved with our process—from the time we are saved to the time we die—is ourselves, and other human beings. Watching us, with very close scrutiny, is an entire array of enemies—not physical enemies and not visible enemies—but there is an entire counsel of the demonic that watches us. And they are looking for every opportunity that they could possibly have to exploit the weaknesses in our condition. The demonic, you see, opposes God and man and their opposition is both personal and systemic—it means that they would oppose you personally and they have an entire governmental order that opposes you and is set to entrap you in every way that they can with every scheme, every trick, and they’ve been at it for 6,000 years.

Listen to just a small piece of the Scriptures on the subject of the array that is against you. In the 6th chapter of the book of **Ephesians**, Paul says, “For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, powers, the rulers of the darkness of this world and spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.” –Ephesians 6:12 KJV**) The NIV puts it this way, it says, “For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but it is against rulers, authorities, and spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” (Inserted – actual verse— **“For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.” – Ephesians 6:12**)

Now what does that sound like to you? If you have rulers who have authority, power and armed forces—that sounds like a governmental order. You have rulers, so they are the leaders; they have power and authority which means they have both the strength to do the thing and they have the authority to do it, and they have “armed forces”—spiritual forces of evil, attending them to carry out their wishes. With that being so, we must understand, as believers, that our struggle is far more complicated—the mind behind it, far more intense; the purpose behind it, far more devious than any of us normally considers on your average day. What has God done to prepare us for these kinds of struggles? Well you see, what God does in relationship to the realm of the demonic is to hold them accountable. Humans do not hold the demonic accountable because we cannot. We didn’t create them and we have no authority over them of our own. They are, in fact, a superior creature to us in many aspects of their being, compared to ours. For example, they are invisible. When an invisible creature operates in the visible realm, that creature enjoys enormous advantages.

Today, in the church, psychology has taken over and so our doctrines, our practices, the things we are learning about, are all teaching us how to “manage” and how to “get by”. But we are not understanding that the principle troubles of the believers come because we have a serious array of enemies against us and these enemies enjoy great advantages and, in the main, are vastly superior to us. They are restrained—not by anything that we say or do that originates with us—they are restrained by what is actually true because God says these things are true, and God restrains them, based upon what God declares to be the truth. One such great truth which restrains the enemy is baptism in water—the final of the four baptisms that we are studying in the Elementary Doctrine series, and that part of it entitled “Baptisms”. Baptism in water is the fourth.

We’ve looked at “Baptism ‘of’ the Spirit”, and we know that if we were properly taught “Baptism ‘of’ the Spirit”,

we would have always been taught that we were born again into a kingdom of power. “Baptism ‘by’ the Spirit”, if we were taught that, we would always have been taught, and would have always known that we have a purpose and a destiny in God and we are assembled properly into only one body, so we would have also known there was only one body. “Baptism of Fire”, if we were properly taught the “Baptism of Fire”, we would have always known that suffering was part of the deal, and it is suffering under the hand of the Lord Jesus Christ to expand our capacity to receive new and fresh insights from God, but also to take on greater incidences of our place and our purpose in the Kingdom. And now: “Baptism in water”. If we were properly taught “Baptism in water”, we would have always known that the old creature died and the new creature has been given life and because of that—because of that truth—the enemy’s ability to harass us as frequently and as systematically as he does would have been dramatically curtailed because all of the accusations that our enemy has against us, he has against the “old” creature—the way we used to be. He has no right to accuse us when we stand in the reality of being a new creation. That’s a fact.

Now let’s look at “Baptism in water” and see how it plays into this. See, the enemy is restrained by what is true; what God has said is true restrains the enemy because, you see, when God says that something is true and we assert *that* as the truth, the enemy is obligated to pay attention to God because it is the word of God that restrains the enemy. Now what is the word of God concerning water baptism? Water baptism has been variously taught by different groups as being a variety of things. Some groups teach water baptism as being necessary for salvation. Other groups teach water baptism as being necessary for church membership. Other groups teach that it is “an outward sign of an inward grace.” Others teach that it is something that is not necessary and if you ever get around to doing it—that’s great—but if you don’t, that’s fine too. Up and down the spectrum, water baptism has either been exalted as a condition precedent to salvation—requiring baptism as a condition to be saved—and from there to the other extreme which is: it is not necessary at all for any particular purpose. If you want to, fine and if you don’t, fine.

When you come against that wide array of potential answers, it is a good idea to go back and look at what the Bible says. What does the Bible say? Here is what the Bible says about water baptism: this is from the 6th chapter of the book of **Romans**. Beginning at **verse 1**, this is a fairly lengthy reading, **“What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? Or don’t you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. If we have been united**

with him like this in his death, we will certainly also be united with him in his resurrection. For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin—because anyone who has died has been freed from sin.” (Inserted – **Romans 6:1-7**)

Now there are some who teach that water baptism is a death, a burial and a resurrection and they analogize to the way baptism takes place, that is: you are put under the water—and by the way, baptism is by immersion, in fact that is the very meaning of the word in the Greek. “Baptizo” is to immerse one thing into another. The idea is that if you put somebody under the water, it’s like they are being buried and if you take them back up, it’s like they are being resurrected—a very good reason for you to take them back up because if you didn’t they would actually die. Baptism itself is a symbol; it’s a symbol of burial because it recognizes death has occurred and, to a person who has died, you must bury them. Resurrection, however, is a whole different matter. **Romans 8:11**, and following, speaks of the nature of our resurrection and it says, “If the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead lives in you,” now, “he who gave Christ life from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies by his Spirit who dwells within you.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“And if the Spirit of him who raised Jesus from the dead is living in you, he who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through his Spirit, who lives in you.”** – **Romans 8:11**)

So baptism is not a death, burial and resurrection; baptism is only a burial. Death has occurred when repentance took place and burial is by baptism; resurrection is by the Holy Spirit. That’s the clear meaning of Scripture. So baptism is not a death, burial and resurrection; it’s a burial. Resurrection is by the Spirit; death is your voluntary will, expressed through repentance. Now what is this saying? This is saying that before you come to Christ there is the requirement that you die. Why? The process of our salvation includes adoption—namely that we are adopted into the family of God. Under the law of adoption, as long as someone has natural parents, that person is not available for adoption.

As long as we are found in Adam we are not available for adoption as the sons of God so to cure the condition of our parentage in Adam, God has ordained that we be brought to death. Death is the decision that we make to cease and desist from governing our lives by our own will. The sign that we have made that decision is that we are willing to be baptized in water. When you do that you are signaling to the heavenlies—to the entire rank and realm of the demonic that you no longer live, that you have made a decision, as an exercise of your will to repent from the way that you have been all of your life. Now it’s in that way that you’ve been, that the demonic finds its greatest opportunities against you. For example, if you’ve lived indulging in pornography the enemy will accuse

you based on that. The spirit of lust will have its place with you. If you've lived in anger—the spirit of anger. If you've lived in fear, if you've been abandoned, if you've been rejected, the enemy will always come and remind you of those things. Now as long as the old creature is alive the enemy can come and bring an accusation against you. And if you respond out of the knowledge that this is in fact, you—not the one who used to be but who has died—but if you respond by recognizing the old person, then you have empowered your enemy against you all over again.

Earlier on in this series when we spoke of repentance from acts that lead to death, we spoke of what happens after you are a believer and you find yourself again, caught in patterns of sin. You simply repent and it breaks the hold of the enemy over you and the right of the enemy to oppress you with that. But this is speaking about something even more basic than that. When you find yourself, having done nothing wrong, or you are not living the life that you used to live before but you cannot get over the hump with the problems and the accusations that go on in your head—one of the things that you ought to look at is whether or not you've been baptized in water. Because what baptism in water establishes is this fact: that even though you now have a life and you have a memory of things you used to do, because you were baptized in water you signaled to all of the heavenly realms that are watching—the realms of God and the realms of the demonic alike—that are watching you, that you made a decision to die to the government of yourself the way you used to be. And when you make that decision—and that decision is called repentance—when you make that decision, God establishes the matter as being factual.

So when the enemy has a person that he can accuse, but that person has died and no longer therefore lives, then the accusation has no right against you. This is what **Romans 8** says, **Romans 8:1** says, “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus.” Period... that's what it means. (Inserted – actual verse—**“Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life set me free from the law of sin and death.” – Romans 8:1,2**) Now here is how it works: you have an advocate before the Father. If you imagine yourself being accused by Satan of things you used to do when you were the old creature and imagine yourself in something of a law court. The accusation is brought by the prosecuting attorney—Ha-satan, it's actually his role. The judge is the Living God who judges the living and the dead and your lawyer, your advocate, is the Lord Jesus Christ.

Now all of these are things that are clearly established within Scripture. “If any man sins,” the Scriptures say, “he has an advocate with the Father—Jesus Christ, the Righteous.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in**

our defense—Jesus Christ, the Righteous One.” – I John 2:1) It’s your lawyer... Jesus is your lawyer. Now, that being the case, here is the trial: the accuser of the brethren brings an accusation against you, [he] charges you with something you used to be before you were a believer. Jesus, your advocate gets up and responds to the charge, and he says to the Father, “Father, I have offered full and complete satisfaction for this sin when I died on the cross and you, as the judge have already accepted my offer of satisfaction and you have considered it a sufficient offer. You have accepted it; it is complete. Everything he has done—when he used to be this old creature—I paid for and you have accepted my payment. Now therefore the only verdict that is possible in this case is this: even though he is guilty, he cannot be condemned... even though he is guilty, he cannot be condemned.”

That’s what happens when the old creature dies and the new creature has been raised. You come under the blood; you come under the provisions of salvation and even though you were guilty before, now you are not because the person to be accused no longer lives. When you pass through the baptism of water, you are declaring to the heavenlies that you have availed yourself of the redemption that has been made possible through the blood of the Lamb and you enlist the services of Jesus Christ on your behalf, as your advocate. That being so, even if you *were* guilty, the creature who lived and was guilty, no longer lives. Therefore, the one who is alive is a new creation and cannot be condemned. That’s what **II Corinthians 5: 17** says, “Therefore, if any man be in Christ he is a new creation; the old has passed and the new has come.” (Inserted – actual verse—**“Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!”**) Whoever is in Christ cannot be condemned. “There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus” (Inserted – **Romans 8:1**)

And the act of water baptism establishes two things: one, that you have died and two, because you have died, you cannot be accused of the things that were true of you at one time. Now the Spirit of God raises you from the dead and the very first cry that you cry out, upon being raised from the dead is, “Father, Father.” You have a different father. Sometimes you are filled with the Holy Spirit before you are baptized in water so you come to the reality of being the new creation, or the new creature, before you are baptized in water. If you find yourself in that place, you ought to go back now—now that you know—and be baptized in water. Now in the next broadcast I will talk about how to be baptized in the Spirit, how to baptized “of” the Spirit or “by” the Spirit, about the baptism of fire and about the baptism of water and we’ll look, intently, on how to facilitate these baptisms. But for you, if you have already received the Holy Spirit, the sign that you are saved, then my recommendation to you is that you... and especially if you are being troubled by thoughts of the way you used to be in the past—I recommend to you that you go back and look at being baptized in water. This will establish you. If you were baptized in water, you

should have known that the old creature has died and the new creature has been made alive. That's the purpose of water baptism and the general purposes of the "baptisms". Baptisms are meant to result in great and significant changes. I'm Sam Soleyn and we'll talk further about the elementary doctrines. God bless you.

Scripture References:

Ephesians 6:12

Romans 6:1-7

Romans 8:11

Romans 8:1,2

I John 2:1

II Corinthians 5:17