

The Epistles Teach Us about Baptism

(1 Peter 3:21)

Introduction:

1. On Wednesday evenings we are presenting a series of lessons that are designed to help us study the Bible more effectively.
2. Last Wednesday we covered some information that will help us in studying the New Testament epistles [letters].
3. The epistles deserve our careful attention because they reveal God's will on many great Bible doctrines.
4. In our lesson we are concentrating on one particular doctrine -- we are examining what "the epistles teach us about baptism."
5. Let us begin our study with . . .

Discussion:

- I. 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17
 - A. People who believe that baptism is not essential to salvation sometimes appeal to this verse written by Paul.
 1. This is interesting because he wrote most of the verses we will examine.
 2. Paul made it very clear that baptism is essential for salvation.
 - B. By looking at this verse in its context we can understand it.
 1. (vs.10-13) Division existed in the Corinthian church, and it was sinful.
 2. (vs.14-16) Paul showed why he was glad that he had personally baptized only a few people in Corinth.
 3. (vs.17) Paul's main mission was to preach the Gospel.
 4. The Gospel leads people to Christ, and they will want to be baptized because it is His will.
 5. The result of Paul's preaching in Corinth is revealed in Acts 18:8.
 6. Paul was not teaching that baptism is not essential for salvation.
- II. ROMANS 6:3-7
 - A. Two verses show that we are "baptized into Christ" -- vs.3 is one of them.
 - B. According to 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, Christ made salvation available through His death, burial, and resurrection.
 - C. Baptism is a likeness of the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection.
 - D. When we are baptized into Christ we are made free from sin, and we are able to walk in newness of life.
 - E. Those who take the position that baptism is not essential are in reality saying the Lord's death, burial, and resurrection were not necessary.
 - F. Christ made a great sacrifice on our behalf, and these verses show us how to receive the salvation that He made available.
- III. 1 CORINTHIANS 12:13
 - A. This verse mentions the "one body" ["the church" -- Ephesians 1:22-23].
 - B. This verse shows us how to get into the one body -- we are baptized into it.
 - C. This applies to everyone: Jews, Gentiles, bond, and free.
 - D. There are not many ways to get into many bodies -- there is one way to get into the one body.
- IV. GALATIANS 3:26-29
 - A. Vs. 27 is the other verse that shows we are baptized into Christ.
 - B. When we are baptized into Him we put Him on.
 - C. This applies to everyone: Jew, Greek, bond, free, male, and female.
 - D. When we are baptized into Christ we become heirs to a very special promise.
- V. EPHESIANS 4:4-6
 - A. There is only one true baptism.
 - B. We learn from Acts 19:5 which baptism the people in Ephesus received -- *"they were baptized in the name of the Lord"* [the baptism commanded by Christ in the Great Commission].
- VI. COLOSSIANS 2:11-13

- A. Baptism is a "burial" [immersion].
- B. We are buried with the Lord, and we are raised with Him.
- C. When we are raised with Christ we receive forgiveness of sins through the faith of the operation of God.

VII. 1 PETER 3:21

- A. This verse clearly teaches that we are saved when we are baptized.
- B. Baptism is not just an outward cleansing.
- C. Rather, it is the response of a person who is honestly seeking to do the Lord's will.
- D. Illustration: Noah (vs.20).

Conclusion:

1. These verses from the epistles reveal some very important information about "baptism."
2. It is an essential part of "the Great Commission."
3. Have you complied with these passages that we have studied?