

## 129. Water Baptism By Arland Steen

### Supreme Scripture

Mark 16:15-18 (NKJ): <sup>15</sup> And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. <sup>16</sup> **He who believes and is baptized will be saved**; but he who does not believe will be condemned. <sup>17</sup> And these signs will follow those who believe: In My name they will cast out demons; they will speak with new tongues; <sup>18</sup> they will take up serpents; and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them; they will lay hands on the sick, and they will recover."

In it He said, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16).

Jesus tied water baptism to the Great Commission, but why?

Water baptism in its raw form is simple obedience to something Jesus told us to do.

### Why People Fail To Obey This Command

- They simply think it to be just a church tradition or maybe the idea of a man
- If one was baptized in the Holy Spirit first they may think water baptism to be unnecessary
- But scripture shows this to be false

When Peter was in the house of Cornelius, he preached Jesus and this is what happened.

Acts 10:44-47 (NKJ): <sup>44</sup> While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word. <sup>45</sup> And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also. <sup>46</sup> For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered, <sup>47</sup> Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit?"

This shows that even being filled with the Spirit is not a substitute nor fills the requirement for baptism in water.

### Five Reasons Why Water Baptism Is So Important

**First**, it is important because it helps us live with a new mind-set, which is:

*I have submitted myself in obedience to Jesus' lordship and this is my lifetime commitment. My will is to do His will.* To obey is a freeing experience – leading to no anxiety and no open door to the devil.

**Second**, it is important because it potentially opens us to the fullness of being baptized in the Holy Spirit.

Peter says this in Acts 2:38 (NKJ): *Then Peter said to them, 'Repent and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'*

Obedience in one area seems to lead to obedience in another.

**Third**, water baptism is an action we choose signifying burial with Christ, like a funeral at sea. We are to bury our old ways in the waters where Jesus calls us to meet Him. We use the word "commit" at funerals as the body is lowered into the ground. Similarly, our commitment to Jesus is that for all the remaining years of our lives, we will be dead to our past, carnal ways.

But that's not the end of it. Paul declared:

Romans 8:11 (NKJ): *But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.*

To live the baptized life means you allow the Spirit of God to resurrect you on a daily basis, lifting you above the dead habits of the past and into newness of life for today and tomorrow.

**Fourth**, Paul likens water baptism to circumcision of the heart. In doing so, he uses the Old Testament rite involving cutting away the foreskin of the male sex organ. That is the most private part of the male body but there is an important lesson to be learned.

He wants us to cut away flesh or the carnality from our lives. Just as the removal of that small part of excess flesh does not inhibit the function of the male organ, the removal of flesh from our lives will not inhibit our capacity for doing great things for God.

In fact, their removal will enhance His purpose for our lives.

Remember it was only after the circumcision of Abraham that the miracle of Isaac's conception took place.

**And fifth**, water baptism is a prime opportunity for deliverance from sin ,just as it was when the children of Israel were "all baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea"

1 Corinthians 10:1-2 (NKJ): <sup>1</sup> *Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea* <sup>2</sup> *all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.*

Water baptism is not just a church tradition. It is a miracle moment!