

The True Meaning of Baptism

Fred R. Coulter – July 8, 2000

What is the true meaning of baptism? Most of us have been baptized for many, many years. As a matter of fact, this October 19th it'll be 40 years for me. But, let's go back for all of us, old and new, and let's look at the true meaning of baptism. Because not only is there a true meaning to baptism, there are also many counterfeit baptisms—which many people consider to be baptisms. Let's first of all start out and answer the question what it is not:

1. It is not an initiation
2. It is not to join an organization
3. It is not to be baptized into the name of any man or woman—such as the Seventh Day Adventists, they ask you, “Do you believe that Ellen G. White is a prophetess of God?” That is then not a valid baptism.
4. It is not an outward sign of inner-faith—though some people may considerate it to be so.
5. It is not a sprinkling—and we'll explain why it's not a sprinkling.
6. It is not for infants and children—because it has to be conscience decision by the one being baptized.
7. It is not a ritual—it is a ceremony, but it is not a ritual.

And then we'll ask the question: If you were baptized in another church, or even in a Church of God, should you be baptized again?

Now first of all, let's look at the Old Testament for just a minute and let's understand something concerning the Old Testament. Let's go to Genesis 17. Even with the covenant with Abraham, which he received when he was in uncircumcision, yet, as a prelude and a token of the covenant that was made, there was physical circumcision. So let's come to Genesis 17:9: “And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant... [Now we're going to understand something concerning baptism and covenants—very important. Covenants are to be kept unto death. That's why it's not a ritual. That's why it is none of the other things that I have mentioned.] ...This *is* my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised. And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you. And he that is eight days old shall be circumcised among you, every man child in your generations, he that is born in the house, or bought with money of any stranger, which *is* not of thy seed. He that is born in thy house, and he that is bought with thy money, must needs be circumcised: and my covenant shall be in your flesh for an everlasting covenant” (vs 9–13). Now that means *an age-lasting*

covenant. So that was from the time the physical circumcision—from the time of Abraham and Isaac; and in this case, even Ishmael—that came down to the time of Christ. But what we are going to see is this: the physical circumcision was only a type of the spiritual circumcision, which requires a greater change. And the spiritual circumcision is what is at the heart and core of baptism in the New Testament, as we will see later.

Now at 8 days old, the men children had no say-so, they were just circumcised. Let's come to Deuteronomy, the tenth chapter, and let's see what God was really looking for with it—which He had with Abraham in the uncircumcision of his heart before he was circumcised in the flesh. And I think it's very interesting to understand, that only the males were required to be circumcised. However, at marriage, the females participated in that in the marriage estate through the conjugal relations of husband and wife. Now here, Deuteronomy 10—here's the whole purpose behind it and here is a prophecy concerning circumcision of the heart, which we'll talk about a little bit later. Verse 12: “And now, Israel... [and you can put your own name there, because this is what God requires of all of us] ...what doth the LORD thy God require of thee, but to fear the LORD thy God, to walk in all his ways, and to love him, and to serve the LORD thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul... [and as He shows through the whole experience of the Old Testament, without the Holy Spirit and the circumcision of the heart, they never were able to do it. Which ought to be a whole lesson to everyone that you cannot, without the Spirit of God, love God and keep His commandments in the way that you ought to—as we will see a little later.] ...To keep the commandments of the LORD, and his statutes, which I command thee this day for thy good?” (vs 12-13).

Now, if you would like an interesting little Bible study, get out your concordance and look up all the places where God said, “For your good.” This runs contrary and counter to what a lot of religious people who worship on Sunday believe. They believe that the commandments of God were given for our hurt. They believe that the commandments of God were given to curse us. Such is not the case. Read Deuteronomy 28 and you will see that blessings come from obedience and cursings come from disobedience—and neither one of those necessarily have to do with conversion. Even the blessings in the physical realm have nothing to do with conversion.

Now let's continue on here, v 14: “Behold, the heaven and the heaven of heavens *is* the LORD'S thy God, the earth *also*, with all that

therein *is*. Only the LORD had a delight in thy fathers to love them... [that is Abraham, Isaac and Jacob] ...and he chose their seed after them, *even* you above all people, as *it is* this day.... [That's why it's very important in the Passover book that you read and you study the three chapters concerning the covenant of Abraham—showing the physical seed and the spiritual seed.] (Now v 16—here we get into the spiritual operation of this): ...Circumcise therefore the foreskin of your heart, and be no more stiffnecked... [So the physical circumcision was only a type of the spiritual circumcision of the heart. And we are going to see that the spiritual circumcision of the heart is greater than the circumcision in the flesh.] ...For the LORD your God *is* God of gods, and Lord of lords... [And of course, all the other gods of this world are not gods are they? So what is this? This is a prophecy of those who will be born into the Kingdom of God as a spiritual seed at the time of the resurrection.] ...a great God, a mighty, and a terrible, which regardeth not persons, nor taketh reward: He doth execute the judgment of the fatherless and widow, and loveth the stranger, in giving him food and raiment. Love ye therefore the stranger: for ye were strangers in the land of Egypt. Thou shalt fear the LORD thy God; him shalt thou serve, and to him shalt thou cleave, and swear by his name. He *is* thy praise, and he *is* thy God, that hath done for thee these great and terrible things, which thine eyes have seen.... [Then he just reiterates] ...Thy fathers went down into Egypt with threescore and ten persons; and now the LORD thy God hath made thee as the stars of heaven for multitude" (vs 14–22). Not only for those, it wasn't really the stars of heaven for multitude because they could number them. Did they not number them? That's what the book of Numbers is all about. So this is really a prophecy concerning the ultimate—that is the spiritual seed.

Now let's go to Deuteronomy 30:6—now let's see who does the circumcising. It says "circumcise the foreskin of your heart" there in Deut. 10; now it says that God will circumcise your heart. How do you put the two together. Now, we will see that they go together this way: Your part of it is repentance. God's part of it is giving the Holy Spirit. Verse 6: "And the LORD thy God will circumcise thine heart, and the heart of thy seed, to love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, that thou mayest live." Now again, there we have even a prophecy concerning those who will be born into the Kingdom of God through the power of the resurrection.

Now let's come to the New Testament, and let's see the basis for baptism, what God has done. Let's come to Romans, the third chapter, and let's begin here. Now, in spite of all the things that God did for Israel and the Jews, nevertheless, it did not solve the problem concerning sin. They were justified to the temple but they were not justified to God the Father in heaven above. So please read that in *The Christian Passover* book. Romans 3:9: "What then? Are we of ourselves better?... [that is the

Jews vs the Gentiles] ...**Not at all!**... [we need to understand that] ...For we have already charged both Jews and Gentiles—**ALL**—*with* being under sin... [When you are under sin that means you have the penalty of sin hanging over you. What is the penalty of sin? The 'wages of sin is death.' Now 'as in Adam we all die,' but the death that it's talking about—the wages of sin is death—is the spiritual death of the second death, which we will see is part of baptism.] ...Exactly as it is written: 'For there is not a righteous one—not even one!... [because our righteousness has to come from Christ. Our righteousness has to come from God's way.] ... There is not one who understands; there is not one who seeks after God. They have all gone out of the way; together they have *all* become depraved. There is not *even* one who is practicing kindness. No, there is not so much as one!'" (vs 9-12).

Now, what if a person is good in this society? Now there are a lot of good people in this society, right? Here He's talking about **spiritually good!** Let's use the example of Job again. Was not Job good? In relationship to what he did in the society, even in keeping the laws of God? *Yes, but he was not converted, meaning that he did not have the Holy Spirit of God.* When you come to the conclusion of the matter, and Job repented, then he received the Spirit of God. That's why, without the Spirit of God, there is none good though they can do good. But please understand, not all good is from God. There is the knowledge of the tree of what? *Of good and evil.* And as long as you have your carnal human nature, which we do until death, there is none good. That's why you have to have the righteousness of Christ given to you. That's why God has to call.

"...Their throats *are* like an open grave; with their tongues they have used deceit; *the* venom of asps *is* under their lips, Whose mouths are full of cursing and bitterness; Their feet *are* swift to shed blood; Destruction and misery *are* in their ways; And *the* way of peace they have not known. There is no fear of God before their eyes.' Now then, we know that whatever the law says, it speaks to those who are under the law... [Who are under the law? *All sinners!*] ...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (vs 13–19). So there you have it. ***All have "sinned and come short of the glory of God."***

Now how is God going to solve this problem? God has to do something in it, which then begins to lead us to baptism. Let's go back and see the beginnings of baptism. We'll come back here to the book of Romans because we'll be there later. Let's come back to Matthew, the third chapter—and this shows us the beginning of baptism. Now the only other rituals that they had before was when they were unclean because of a sickness or an illness or unclean because of some sin. Not all sins required it, but some sins. That they would bathe when they were done, like they would be unclean seven days and then on the eighth day then they would bathe and be clean.

Now then, the only other ones to bathe in that manner were the priests. And they had to bathe before the priest went in to offer the incense and go into the Holy of Holies once a year on the Day of Atonement.

Now we have something brand new beginning with John the Baptist. This is why it said in the New Testament: “The law and the prophets were until John. That means that the law and the prophets were used as the basis for preaching. It does not eliminate the law and the prophets because Jesus said, “Don’t think that I’ve come to destroy the law or the prophets. I’ve not come to destroy but to fulfill.” But what it means is that now beginning with John, the authority for preaching has a higher standard. That is the standard of the Kingdom of God, or as it says here in Matthew, he uses mostly the Kingdom of heaven. So let’s begin in Matthew 3:1: “Now in those days John the Baptist came preaching in the wilderness of Judea, And saying, ‘Repent... [Now then, baptism requires entirely different. You are to REPENT!] ...for the kingdom of heaven is at hand’.... [And that’s what he was preaching.] ...For this is he who was spoken of by Isaiah the prophet, saying, ‘The voice of one crying in the wilderness, “Prepare the way of the Lord, make straight His paths.”’ Now John himself wore a garment of camel’s hair, and a leather belt around his waist; and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then went out to him *those from* Jerusalem, and all Judea, and all the country around the Jordan” (vs 1-5). Now contrary to opinion, the Jordan River is plenty deep enough to have water to be baptized in.

Now let’s understand something concerning the word “baptize.” To baptize is the Greek word: ‘baptizo’—which means *to submerge*, even used in cases of a sunken ship. Now a sunken ship is below the water, isn’t it? And we will see there is a reason for being put below the water and rather than sprinkling. Verse 6: “...And were being baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins. But after seeing many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them... [‘Why, it’s so nice to see you wonderful, sweet loving religious people here. It’s marvelous that you have come down. I have been waiting for you.’ NO! he said]: ‘...*You* brood of vipers... [Now, a Palestinian viper is some viper! And when he says, ‘generation of vipers’ (KJV) that’s directly relating to the fact that they are the children of the Devil.] ...who has forewarned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore, produce fruits worthy of repentance... [or answerable for an amendment to life. So ‘repentance’ means *that you come to the knowledge and understanding*—which we’ll see in just a minute—that *God leads you to that you are a sinner!* Not only that you have sinned, but you *are* a sinner. Like the Apostle Paul said in 1-Tim. 1, he said that ‘it is a truth that Christ came to save sinners of whom I am the chief!’ Answerable to amendments of life.] ... And do not think to say within yourselves, ‘We have Abraham *for our father*’... [and we are circumcised.] ...for I tell you that God is able from

these stones to raise up children to Abraham” (vs 6-9). So it’s not all who come, as we read earlier about bringing unchurched people in. If they don’t repent how can they be part of the spiritual body of Christ? If they don’t receive the Holy Spirit of God what do you have? *You have a carnal church of do-gooders.*

Now notice how kindly he spoke to them: “But already the axe is striking at the roots of the trees; therefore, every tree that is not producing good fruit... [that is of repentance and love to God and obedience.] ...is cut down and thrown into *the* fire... [Now this is talking about the second death and the lake of fire, which we will see is related to baptism, a little later.] ...I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance; but the one Who *is* coming after me is mightier than I, of Whom I am not fit to carry His sandals; He shall baptize you with *the* Holy Spirit, and with fire” (vs 10-11).

Now let me just make a mention here that baptism by fire is not the result of a Pentecostal meeting where everyone is rolling in the aisles, jumping up and down, stomping on the floor, running around and saying ‘Halleluiah, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus, Jesus. That is demonic, spiritual confusion. And God is not the author of confusion. Baptism by fire—since “baptizo” means *to be immersed in fire*—just look at it this way: consider those who commit the unpardonable sin will be cast into a lake of fire which then is what? *Molten lava*. And you are submerged in molten lava. Which means you are burned up. So anyone who says they had a spiritual experience in a Pentecostal church and they had the baptism by fire, you better repent of that or you will have the baptism by fire—God’s fire! What you had is a Satanic, demonic experience.

Now notice: “Whose winnowing shovel *is* in His hand, and He will thoroughly purge His floor, and will gather His wheat into the granary; but the chaff He will burn up with unquenchable fire” (v 12). Because no one is going to put it out. Now that’s how baptism started.

Now we know that it talks about, in John 4 (we won’t turn there, we’ll by-pass it) let’s come to Acts, the second chapter and let’s get to the heart and core of the real meaning of baptism. But it says in John 4 that Jesus baptized yet He didn’t, it was His disciples who baptized. Acts 2:36—after Peter preached, now this becomes important: “Therefore, let all *the* house of Israel know with full assurance that God has made this *same* Jesus, Whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.’ Now after hearing *this*, they were cut to the heart...” (vs 36-37). Now this is important to understand. This is the first part of repentance. God has to do something in your life and in your heart and in your mind to lead you to this beginning point of baptism, which is called ‘*pricked in your hearts.*’

Hold your place here and let’s come to Romans, the second chapter, because we’ll come back to Acts, the second chapter. God is the one

Who does this. Now this is a sorrow, a deep sorrow, for amendment of a way of life and you resolve in your mind to turn and go the other way. And we're going to see that it is actually God Who is doing this. Now, I remember when I was baptized—it'll be 40 years ago on Oct. 19th; this year—and I remember I was leading my life and I knew nothing of God; knew nothing of sin; knew nothing of right; knew nothing of wrong; and I was doing great in the world. Whiz bang! Going to college in San Mateo, getting my education, all of this and I'm going to do great stuff when I get done with this. And all of sudden God knocked me off my horse by giving me a challenge—and that was in my paleontology class at the College of San Mateo. And I did not grow up in a religious family. And I had not been reared in a church. My folks did try and have me confirmed in the Lutheran Church when I was 12, but I always escaped out of the lessons and was never confirmed. And as soon as they brought me to church I always left—I was really a renegade that way. A matter of fact, my mom would drive me up to the pastor's house where I had to go take the confirmation lessons, and I'd stand up on the porch and wave goodbye and pretend that I rang the doorbell, and as soon as she was gone I jumped over the side of the porch and went on down and went fishing. This was in the small town of Poulsbo, Washington. So I had no "religious" background at all. And the way the challenge came about was this: The very first day—and this is a class you had to take, you could not graduate unless you had this class; required. So here are 400 of us sitting in the theater and the professor was down there and he stepped out there and after a while the bell rang and then he stood there and just waited and waited and waited. And finally, not saying anything, it finally got quiet. And he said, the very first words out of his mouth: "If there's anyone who believes in God and in the Bible there is the door. It will not be discussed in this class!" Well, that just got my hackles up. And that's what God used to begin to call me.

Well, subsequently, a few weeks after that, because I had certain difficulties in my life, because God was working with my mind, bringing me to understand how miserable and rotten that I was as a person, I was in my little old Nash Rambler where I had not changed the radio station in three years because I listened to the classical music station and that's the only thing I listened to. And most nights I was working when the World Tomorrow program was on KGO at 9:30. So I never heard it. Except this one night, I just happened to be in my car at that time and on the classical music station they were playing the Dirge of Bach—you know, Bach's Brandenburg concertos which it just drive me up a wall—so I changed the station and I heard the World Tomorrow program. And as I heard it I knew that that was an answer to the prayer that I asked God to help me with. That was my first prayer, "Oh God, help me." And God answered. So I wrote in for the *Plain Truth* and so forth and so on. Then in August—that must have been in about April that year—that year, I went down to visit the campus. And I wasn't ready for baptism so I came back and I announced to

my boss—I was working in a restaurant at that time—and I would work almost any shift but I couldn't work from Friday night sundown to Saturday night sundown. And he looked at me and said, "Well, why?" Because I'd work seven days a week, any shift, anywhere, anytime and they had three restaurants which I could work in—sometimes I would work 16 hours a day.

He looked at me, "Why?"

"Because of my religion."

He looked at me, "well, when did you become religious?"

So I said, "If you can't do it, let me know, you got my two weeks notice."

"Now wait a minute, wait a minute." So he didn't want to lose me, "I'll go back and look at the schedule." So he went back and looked at the schedule and said, "Nope, I can't do it."

So I said, "Do you mind if I do it?"

So to make a long story short, I went back and I worked it out where I could work Fridays from eight to four and that would get me off before sundown for Friday, then I would come in Saturday night at 12:30 after midnight and work the graveyard shift and then have Tuesday off.

But here in Romans 2, the reason why I'm saying this is because *it is God that leads you to repentance*. It is *God* that opens your mind. Now, I don't know what the circumstances were that God used to call you. Maybe it was a radio program, or a television program, or a booklet, or maybe it was one of your relatives, or maybe it was husband or wife, whatever the case may be. But *it is God Who does it*. The vehicle which He uses will be different because every person needs to be approached in a different way. So God will deal with each one of us at our own level. So whatever your circumstances were, God has dealt with you. Now let's pick it up here Romans 2:4: "Or do you despise the riches of His kindness and forbearance and long-suffering, not knowing that the [goodness] graciousness of God leads you to repentance?" And 'goodness' here is the same base word as 'grace.' Or could be called "the graciousness of God leads you to repentance." Why? *Because "by grace are you saved and that not of yourselves."* God is the one Who does the calling.

Now, hold your place—continue there in Acts 2—and let's come back to John 6 and let's see something else that is important. In this age, God is the one Who has to do the calling. As a matter of fact it says, "many are called but few are chosen." And if many are called and few are chosen, how is it that there are millions and millions and millions of professing Christians. Well, we'll see a little later on that that's based upon whether they keep the commandments of God or not. John 6:44: "No one [man or woman] can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him..." That's the whole process that God uses—He draws you with His Spirit. Now that's important to understand. Because if you have been a Protestant, and you went through the routine of going to like a Billy Graham

evangelistic campaign where there it is they say, “all have sinned and come short of the glory of God,” “the wages of sin is death,” “you need to give your heart to the Lord.” And everyone says, “Yes, yes, yes, I need to give my heart to the Lord.” All you do is say this prayer: “Lord Jesus, enter my heart.” You are saved. WRONG! WRONG! WRONG! A false Christ, a misuse of Scripture and you are no more saved than the thought. You may become a better person because you desire to do good, but even people in the world can improve themselves, can they not? Can not drug addicts overcome drugs? Cannot people change their behavior through things that they learn through how to improve your life? *Yes!* But that doesn’t mean that they’re converted. That’s why people who attend the churches of this world are maybe better citizens than those who don’t attend church or are atheists or completely lawless. But that doesn’t necessarily mean that they are saved because “No one can come to Me unless the Father, Who sent Me, draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day. It is written in the prophets, ‘And they shall all be taught by God’.... [That’s why God has to do the calling. That’s why God sends the Holy Spirit to stir up your heart and mind for desire for truth, desire to understand why you are the way that you are. Desire to understand why your life is such a wreck and a shambles; and that you can repent to God because it’s sin that’s doing it. And God is the one Who leads you to it.] ...Therefore, everyone who has heard from the Father, and has learned, comes to Me” (vs 44-45).

Now, let’s come here to v 65: “And He said, ‘For this reason, I have said to you, no one can come to Me unless it has been given to him from My Father.’” So the whole process of even being called to repentance is a gift of God—the *gift of repentance*. That’s why they were pricked in their hearts. *It is the gift of repentance, which is graciousness from God.* Now, there is a sorrow of this world. So it has to be a greater sorrow than of the world.

Now, let’s go back here to Acts, the second chapter, and let’s ask the question: Why were they pricked in their hearts? Now many of them lived right in the area of Judea, didn’t they? Many of them lived right there in Jerusalem where the temple was, weren’t they? Had they not heard of Christ? Had many of them not even seen Christ? I wonder how many of the 3,000 that were baptized on that day were part of the 4,000 or 5,000 that were fed by Jesus, or were part of the multiple numbers of those who were healed. I wonder if the young man who was the only son of the widow who had died and God raised back to life was one of those who was baptized? Makes you wonder. They had heard and they understood what it was that Christ had gone through in the crucifixion. They lived in the time when they would walk by and see people having been crucified, hanging on crosses, and know and understand the agony. And that they understood then, through what Peter was preaching, and pricked them in the heart that *their sins did kill Christ*—

because Christ died for the sins of the whole world. And that expressed the love of God. So that’s why they were pricked in their hearts. And they said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, “Men and brethren, what shall we do.” Because there comes a time when you have to have action.

That’s what happened to me. I go t back and once I started keeping the Sabbath I began to understand things, which I didn’t understand before. And then I knew I had to be baptized. And so in October—I went down on October 18th, because I was baptized the next day. I went down in my little old Nash Rambler, and I was going down toward Pasadena. It was Highway 99—remember Highway 99?—and you had to go over the “grapevine.” And I remember that stretch right out of Bakersfield—maybe you’ll remember it. There’s this straight stretch where there’s these big eucalyptus trees, and I was listening to a World Tomorrow program and it happened to be on repentance. And I was listening very intently and it really convicted me in heart. And so, here I’m driving along repenting and tears streaming down and, you know, it is a deep and emotional and spiritual experience that you will go through. And so, I got down there and I stayed in a motel, then the next day I went ahead and got a whole stack of booklets and spent a whole day reading booklets in the motel. And then the second day on the 19th then I was counseled for baptism by Richard Plechette and Clarence Hughes and was baptized.

Now the whole purpose of being baptized, as we will see, is to bury the old sinful self. But the result of it is, is to receive the Holy Spirit, because we’ll see a little later on, unless you receive the Holy Spirit then a baptism is only a dunking! Or as one man put it, “A short bath with clothes on.” So let’s read here: “Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent... [which they did] ...and be baptized each one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you yourselves shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’” (Acts 2:38). That is what you want to receive—the gift of the Holy Spirit. And the Holy Spirit is given to those who obey God because they have now repented of their sins. Now let’s add one thing right here concerning being baptized in the name of Jesus.

Let’s go to Matthew, the 28th chapter, because there is more to it than just the name of Jesus, we’ll see that. Now some people are kind of afraid that this is a trinitarian formula, which it is not! Matthew. 28:19: “‘Therefore, go *and* make disciples in all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit; Teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you. And lo, I am with you always, *even* until the completion of the age.’ Amen” (vs 19-20). Why are you baptized into the name of the Father? *Because you’re going to be the child of God.* And the children bear the name of the Father, do they not? *Yes!* Who sends the Holy Spirit of begettal? *God the Father.* That’s why it’s in the name of the Father. And “of the Son.”—notice it doesn’t

say “name of”—but “of the Son.” Why? *Because it’s through the crucifixion of Jesus Christ that all of this is made possible for you.* And “of the Spirit” *because you are to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.*

So the way that I baptize is this—just a short summary here: “I baptize you not into any sect or denomination of this world...[and this is a covenant death which we’ll talk about a little bit later] ...but into the name of the Father because He will beget you with His Spirit....

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...And of the Son because of the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, and of the Holy Spirit because you receive the gift of God and all of this is done in the name of Jesus Christ.” So you are baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

Now, let’s continue on here. Let’s see what kind of repentance that we need. Let’s come to Psalm 86. Now we know that the New Testament says that the angels in heaven rejoice over every sinner that repents. Why? *Because repentance is such a difficult thing.* There is the sorrow of the world which is you’ve been caught and you’re upset about being caught. Or maybe you did something and there is some remorse. But you are not sorrowed unto death. That is sorrowed unto the point that you understand that the wages of your life—being sin—leads to death; and that your life and your sins have killed Christ. That’s why there’s sorrow. Now, let’s see God’s graciousness as extended here. “Bow down thine ear, O LORD, hear me: for I *am* poor and needy. Preserve my soul; for I *am* holy: O thou my God, save thy servant that trusteth in thee. Be merciful unto me, O Lord: for I cry unto thee daily. Rejoice the soul of thy servant: for unto thee, O Lord, do I lift up my soul. **For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive...** [Now this is in mind for all of us; whenever you do sin, God is ready to forgive. Whenever you truly repent.] ...and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee” (Psa. 86:1-5).

Here now let’s go to Psalm 103:1: “O my soul: and all that is within me, *ble*ss his holy name. Bless the LORD, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits: Who forgiveth all thine iniquities... [And please understand that, brethren. If you truly repent He doesn’t give you a 98% score. He gives you 100%. He forgives all your sins. Now what about sins you can’t even remember. That’s why there’s the operation of baptism. Because how could you possibly remember every sin that you ever did? *You can’t!* That’s why there’s the burial in the watery grave as we will see.] ...Who forgiveth all thine iniquities who healeth all thy diseases; Who redeemeth thy life from destruction; who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies” (vs 1-4). And that’s what God does. Is not being called and given the Holy Spirit of God being crowned with

loving kindness and tender mercies? *Without a doubt!*

Now let’s go to Psalm 51—let’s see the repentance of David, which is the kind of Godly repentance that will lead us unto understanding about the sacrifice of Jesus Christ and that then God will apply the sacrifice of Jesus Christ to you. Now what is the verse in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, so that everyone who believes in Him... [and we’ll get to that in just a little bit. **You must believe!**] ...may not perish, but may have everlasting life.”

Now here’s how it is done when we repent. Psalm 51:1: “Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin... [not only just in the physical thing of being baptized in water, but also spiritually in your mind—which we will see is the circumcision of the heart.] ...For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin *is* ever before me.... [And that’s what happens when God leads you to repentance. Your sins are just standing right up.] ...Against thee, thee only, have I sinned... [because you understand you can sin against people, but God is the one Who gave the law, which says: ‘love your neighbor as yourself.’ God is the one Who gave the law: ‘honor your father and mother.’ Who gave the law: ‘you shall not commit murder.’ ‘You shall not commit adultery.’ ‘You shall not steal.’ ‘You shall not bear false witness.’ ‘You shall not covet.’ And that’s why the law is given. Then with the power of the Holy Spirit, to convict you of sin, so that you will be like David was here. Only against God have you sinned—and have this in mind. Even if you were the only person on earth, your sins would have killed Christ because He created you!] ...and done *this* evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, *and* be clear when thou judgest. Behold, I was shapen in iniquity, and in sin did my mother conceive me. Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts...” (vs 1-6).

Now then, after you confess your sins and after you are baptized then here is the growing part, which to grow in grace and knowledge. Desire truth ‘in the inward parts.’ And that’s all of the process of growing and overcoming.] ...and in the hidden *part* thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop... [scrub me clean—if you can liken it unto—I’m an old fashioned guy—remember SOS, you know, steel wool. That’s what hyssop is.] ...and I shall be clean: wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. Make me to hear joy and gladness; *that* the bones *which* thou hast broken may rejoice. Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me” (vs 6-11). And that’s what baptism is all about. So that will take place.

Now, let's come to Romans, the sixth chapter, because this tells us more about baptism than anything else. Let's understand something concerning the New Covenant. The New Covenant is based upon the crucifixion and death, the shedding of the blood of Jesus Christ, and His resurrection. Now when we enter into baptism it is a spiritual death. That is why it is not a ritual but it is a ceremony. That's why it cannot be an initiation into an organization because it is into Christ, as we will see. Now, let's begin here in Romans. 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin, so that grace may abound? **MAY IT NEVER BE!** We who died to sin, how shall we live any longer therein?... [Now how do you die to sin? *Through baptism!* And that as we know, every year we renew our baptism through the footwashing. You can read that in the Passover book.] ...live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, were baptized into His death?" (vs 1-3). So there is great meaning with baptism. That's why you are submersed under water. And it is the closest thing that you can come to, to die because you are buried. You are buried with Christ in baptism. Then you are raised out of that watery grave. Now, if we kept you under the water long enough, you would truly die. But I haven't been know to do that yet, so don't worry.

Verse 4: "Therefore, we were buried with Him though the baptism into the death..." Now since it is a covenant relationship that you are entering into between God the Father, Jesus Christ and you personally, you are being co-joined into that death. Christ's sacrifice did what? *Paid for your sins.* That's why you are baptized into that death. Another reason you are baptized into that death is this: Is that it is a *covenant pledge*. And a covenant pledge cannot be broken. If you do break it. Let me rephrase it: **A covenant pledge is NOT TO BE broken.** Once you make that covenant pledge, you're buried with Christ in the watery grave. Now then, you have pledged that as you come out of the watery grave you're going to walk in newness of life. And that if you go back on that covenant pledge and, that's not to say that you won't sin because we'll cover that (I don't know if we'll have time on this tape or not, but we'll cover later) if you go back on that covenant pledge and reject God and reject Christ and reject His commandments—which there are some who have done it knowingly—you then have pledged your death in the lake of fire! So that's something you need to understand. That's why you're baptized into His death. Now please understand: God wants you to live, but He wants you to understand you're going to live by His way—and it is a way of life. It is not just a religion or something that you do. It's not just churching the unchurched.

"...so that, just as Christ was raised from *the* dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life.... [In the Spirit of God. In the commandments of God.] ...For if we

have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death, so also shall we be *in the likeness* of His resurrection... [Meaning that, God is going to grant you eternal life in power, in splendor, and in glory! So that's something to understand.] ...Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with *Him*.... [That's why you're buried in the watery grave.] ...in order that the body of sin might be destroyed, so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin" (vs 4-6). Meaning that we're to no longer live in sin, walk in sin—but because of our human nature we will see we do sin. But we have, upon repentance, forgiveness available. And only those who are truly in Christ have that forgiveness available. So that's the encouragement in it. Now are you not willing to give up your whole self in the death of baptism to receive that? To receive the Holy Spirit. The promise of eternal life. That's what it's all about.

Now, here's the kind of commitment that we need to have—let's come to Luke 14, first. Here's the kind of commitment that we need to have, and which means that we need to commit ourselves unto this.

- That's why we have the Passover every year.
- That's why we have the Feast of Unleavened Bread.
- That's why it pictures putting out sin from us spiritually.
- Living in the commandments of God.
- Growing and overcoming.

Now let's pick it up here in Luke 14:25: "And great multitudes were going with Him... [and He said, 'Ya'll come into the synagogue now, all you unchurched just come in, we need numbers here. These rabbis are needing more money. They're needing more people. We need more pledges. You know, we need more good folk.' NO, NO, NO!] ... and He turned *and* said to them, 'If anyone comes to Me and does not hate his father... [now I want you to understand: this is the *covenant pledge*, which we will see means *to love God more than*. This is pretty strong stuff.] ...and mother, and wife, and children, and brothers and sisters, and, in addition, his own life also, he cannot be My disciple.... [And the Greek there is 'ou dunamai'—*the strongest negation of having no power* to become a disciple of Christ. That's how important baptism is.] (Notice): ...And whoever does not carry his cross... [Didn't we read that the old man may be crucified? *Yes.*] ...and come after Me cannot... ['ou dunamai'—*the impossibility of it.*] ...be My disciple. For which one of you, desiring to build a tower... [so He gives a parable about building a new life.] ...does not first sit down and count the cost, whether he has *sufficient* for its completion; Lest perhaps... [or that is *unfortunately*] ...after he has laid its foundation and is not able to finish, all who see *it* begin to mock him, Saying, 'This man began to build, and was not able to finish'? Or what king, when he goes out to engage another king in war, does not first sit down *and* take counsel, whether he will be able with ten thousand to

meet him who is coming against him with twenty thousand? But if not, while his *enemy* is still far off, he sends ambassadors and desires the *terms* for peace. In the same way also, each one of you who does not forsake all that he possesses cannot be My disciple” (vs 25-33). Now how do you forsake all that you have? Does that mean you put it up for sale and go live in a monastery under a pledge of poverty? *No*. It means that you love God more and all the physical things that are around you are counted as nothing. You don’t set your heart on it. In your own mind you have sold it. Now remember the parable of the rich man? He was told to go and sell, literally. And he didn’t do it, because he had great wealth (Matt. 19). Because he put the physical things first. So we have to put the spiritual things first.

Now, after we’re baptized and come out of the watery grave, let’s come to Matthew, the tenth chapter, and let’s get a parallel account to this so you know that you’re not to live by hatred. Of course you’re to love God with all your heart and mind and soul and being. Love your neighbor as yourself. But in relationship to God, ***you are to love no one greater than God!*** That’s what it means. Will it improve a marriage? *Yes! Because then Christ will be in you.* Will it improve your relations with one another? *Yes, because you love your neighbor as yourself.* And you love the brethren as Christ loved us. But here, Matthew 10:37: “The one who loves father or mother more than Me is not worthy of Me; and the one who loves son or daughter more than Me is not worthy of Me. And the one who does not take up his cross... [to crucify himself with Christ, through the watery grave of baptism] ...and follow [after] Me is not worthy of Me. The one who has found his life... [that is in this world] ...shall lose it; and the one who has lost his life... [that is in this world through baptism] ... for My sake shall find it” (vs 37-39). And so, God has everything to give for you. What God wants you to do is to totally surrender yourself to Him. And then make that covenant with Him—that covenant of the watery grave—and then to receive the Holy Spirit.

Now, let’s come to John 14, and it shows what we are to do. Now this was given on the Passover night, just before they left to go out when Jesus was arrested. Let’s come here to v 6—let’s understand why today’s world wants to get rid of Christ. They cannot stand this: “Jesus said to him, ‘I am **the way**, and **the truth**, and **the life**; no one comes to the Father except through Me.’” It’s not going to come any other way, even though it may sound very religious and very sanctimonious and even use some Scriptures. Christ is the way! And the world today, we’re living in the world of deceptive compromise. That you all get along, you all go along. And one religion is just as good as the other.

I just recently—I haven’t finished it—but I’m reading the book by Deepak Chopra, *To Know God*. Reduces Christianity to the level of Hinduism. He doesn’t know God, nor does he know how to know God. And we’ll see why, right over here in v

15—here’s how you begin to know God: “**If** you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments.” And Deepak Chopra does not know God or how to find Him. Maybe the “god of this world”—Satan, who appears as an angel of light. But he is NOT in any way associated with the true God. And I’ve read his book—it’s like Patton, you’ve seen the movie, *Patton*? When he caught Rommel in the ambush? And after he shot up the tanks he said, “Rommel, *blankity blank*, I read your book.” So that’s what I’ve done with Deepak Chopra—I read your book! And also the Dalai Lamas’ and also the Pope’s and also Alan Dershowitz, who thinks God is imperfect and incompetent. ***Everything is today to destroy the knowledge of God.*** And the simple solution to begin to find God is repentance, baptism and keeping His commandments out of a pure love from your heart. So “if love Me, keep My commandments.” The opposite then is, if you don’t love Christ you are not keeping His commandments. Or we could rephrase it another way: if you’re not keeping His commandments you don’t love Him.

Now let’s come down here to v 21: “The one who has My commandments and is keeping them... [So, you have to have them and keep them. Remember, we’re no longer to live in sin. And sin is what? *The transgression of the law.*] ...that is the one who loves Me; and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.” How does He do that? *By calling you! By opening up your mind to His Word and His truth—that’s how He does it.*

Verse 23: “Jesus answered and said to him, ‘**If** anyone loves Me... [Now, you might want to circle that ‘if’—circle the ‘if’ up in v 15, too. IF—the condition is not on God but on you.] ...he will keep My word; and My Father will love him, and We will come to him and make Our abode with him.... [notice v 24, very clearly]: ... **The one who does not love Me does not keep My words**... [not just commandments now, whatever Jesus said.] ... and the word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father’s, Who sent Me.” So if you reject anything in the Bible, you are rejecting the Father! Because He is the one Who sent Christ. He is the one Who then established what the New Covenant is. And didn’t Jesus say, “I speak what My Father told Me”? *Yes*. So that’s Whom you are rejecting.

Now, let’s come to Colossians, the third chapter. Let’s see what we are to do after we are baptized. Colossians 3. We’re to live our life differently. And you know, brethren, I was just thinking the other day—a matter of fact, not the other day, just when I was awake early in the morning, about 2:30; I think I was awake about 2:30 to 4:30; then when 6:30 came it was a little difficult getting up, but you know how it is. Anyway, I was thinking: Why do we need the Sabbath every week? ***Because we live in such a deceived world, and if we didn’t have the Sabbath, to hear the Words of God, to read the Words of God, to study the Words of***

God, to rest and have fellowship with God the Father and Jesus Christ, we would be just like the world in full deception.

Now here, Colossians 3:1—let’s read it: “Therefore, if you have been raised together with Christ... [that is out of the watery grave as we read there in Rom. 6] ...seek the things that are above, where Christ is sitting at *the* right hand of God. Set your affection on the things that are above, and not on the things that are on the earth. For you have died... [through the operation of baptism in the watery grave] ...and your life has been hid together with Christ in God” (vs 1-3). Then it gives the whole—the rest of the whole chapter, I’ll let you read that. That shows you how you are to overcome.

Now let’s come to Romans, the seventh chapter, and let’s see that after we’re baptized one of the things that you need to understand is this: you don’t overcome human nature all at once. And one of the things that plagues people who have been recently baptized is “Whoop! I’ve sinned! Have I committed the unpardonable sin?” Because he or she figured in their own minds that “once I’m baptized I ought to be perfect.” You are baptized because you are imperfect. You are baptized because you are a sinner. And now you have to start learning God’s way and learn to be led by the Holy Spirit of God. Now the Apostle Paul makes this very clear. Now, we’ll just paraphrase some of it—you can read the whole seventh chapter beginning at verse seven, which is this: Once you are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit of God then sin becomes exceedingly sinful, because now you are convicted of it in your mind. Whereas before God called you, you weren’t convicted of sin at all. You were just trying to do your own way, which you thought was right. And if something came along where you were not right, well maybe you could change or modify that; but it didn’t lead to repentance and it didn’t lead to obedience. And it didn’t lead to a conviction of sin.

So here Paul, he says, Romans 7:9: “For I was once alive without law; but after the commandment came, sin revived, and I died.... [Now, how did Paul die? *By baptism, that’s how he died.*] ...And the commandment, which *was meant to result in life*... [which we read back there in Deuteronomy—‘for your good always.’] ...was found *to be* unto death for me Because sin, having taken opportunity by the commandment, deceived me, and by it killed *me*... [Because ‘the wages of sin is death.’] ...Therefore, the law *is* indeed holy, and the commandment holy and righteous and good. Now then, did that which *is* good become death to me? MAY IT NEVER BE! But sin, in order that it might truly be exposed as sin... [That’s why you have a conviction of sin. By the Spirit of God which is leading you to understand that.] ...working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful. For we know that the law is spiritual: but I am carnal, sold under sin” (vs 9-14). Even after his baptism he said this, because understood that his own nature

was evil inherently and only God can change it and only God can help you overcome it. And only with the Spirit of God can that be done. That’s why you die in the watery grave of baptism. Then he shows the struggle that he would go through. There were times when he would sin and he didn’t want to sin. He wanted to do good but couldn’t. And then he said, “There is this conflict in me that I can only be saved of by Christ Jesus.” Now you can also read of that in the Passover book, *The Nature of Man*.

Now what happens after baptism when you find yourself in that situation: lo and behold you’ve sinned. Now let’s go to 1-John, the first chapter, because once you have been baptized, now you are under the grace of God. Covers you like an umbrella.

- You live in grace.
- You walk in grace.
- You have faith through the grace of God.
- You have the Holy Spirit through the grace of God.
- You have the leading you to repentance, which is the gift of God or grace of God.
- All of those combined together.

This grace then gives you access to God the Father so ***when you sin***, if it not a “sin unto death”—that is the unpardonable sin and rejecting Christ. And just like Paul, he hadn’t rejected Christ, he just sinned, like any of us do. Then what do you do? *You go to Christ and repent!* Let’s see that here: 1-John 1:6: “If we proclaim that we have fellowship with Him, but we are walking in the darkness, we are lying to ourselves, and we are not practicing the Truth... [and that actually means *practice the truth*, which is the Word of God.] ...However, if we walk in the light, as He is in the light, *then* we have fellowship with one another... [and notice, this is talking about those who have been baptized.] ...and the blood of Jesus Christ, His own Son, **cleanses us from all sin**... [or every sin] ...If we say that we do not have sin... [that is we don’t have a sinful nature] ...we are deceiving ourselves, and the truth is not in us... If we confess our own sins... [Now, Who do we confess our sins to? No priest. You confess them to God. You get on your knees in the private, quiet place and repent to God:

- Ask Him for strength.
- Ask Him for His Spirit.
- Ask Him to help you overcome.
- Ask Him to help you bring ‘every thought into captivity unto Christ.’

And that is a lifelong thing. And I’m still doing that after 40 years of baptism. And we all will. But we live under God’s grace. We don’t live in sin. I don’t live in sin. But I do sin. But when I do, I confess to God. Now if you hurt or harm somebody else you may have to confess to them and repent to them.] ... If we confess our own sins He is faithful and righteous, to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us

from all unrighteousness” (vs 6-9). And that not only is the instance of sin when you sin, but that is also a process of growing and overcoming.

Remember when Nathan came to David and brought out about the sin of Bathsheba? David said, “Oh, I’ve sinned!” And Nathan said, “Your sin is forgiven. But you’re going to have a little discipline from now on. Your whole household is going to be against you so that you will learn never to sin that way.” And he did! So sometimes we’ll have a little discipline that comes from God. Verse 10: “If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His Word is not in us.” And this is basically what the Gnostics were teaching, as we found, that you have a spark of divine life in you from God so therefore all you have to do is discover the spark of life and you automatically save yourself—you’re not a sinful person. So we deceive ourselves.

Now, 1-John 2:1: “My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And *yet*, if anyone does sin, we have an Advocate with the Father; Jesus Christ *the* Righteous... [Christ is advocating for you. And remember, leading you to repentance over sin does not stop at baptism, it continues all the way through your Christian life.] (now notice v 2): ...And He is *the* propitiation for our sins... [now ‘propitiation’ means *constant atoning sacrifice*. His sacrifice is constant. Once for all—and you can put ‘all time’—so you come to Him and repent and confess your sins, ‘He is faithful and just to forgive your sins. Now notice, lest we get conceited]: ...and not for our sins only, but also for *the sins of the whole world*.... [Which, when you come to understand the Holy Days will show you how God’s plan is going to work that out. When it’s going to be done. Now is not the day of salvation for the whole world. Now is the salvation for those that God calls, as we saw.] ...And by this *standard* we know that we know Him: if we keep His commandments... [that’s after you’ve repented, been baptized, received the Holy Spirit of God, you walk in grace, you live in grace, you continue to confess your sins to Him, continue to keep His commandments. We know that we are in Him]: ...if we keep His commandments.... [that ties right in with John 14:15). ...The one who says, ‘I know Him,’ and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in him.... [And that doesn’t matter who the person is.] (Here’s the whole key): ...On the other hand, *if* anyone is keeping His Word, truly in this one the love of God is being perfected... [That is a lifelong process] ...By this *means* we know that we are in Him. Anyone who claims to dwell in Him is obligating himself also to walk even as He Himself walked” (vs 1-6).

Now let’s go to 1-John 4:9: “In this way the love of God was manifested toward us: that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, so that we might live through Him. In this *act* is the love—not that we loved God; rather, that He loved us and sent His Son *to be the* propitiation for our sins” (vs 9-10). And He sits at the right hand of God right now to do

that.

Now let’s look quickly at two other things. The circumcision without hands. Come to Colossians 2:11: “In Whom you have also been circumcised with *the* circumcision not made by hands... [This is the spiritual circumcision of the heart that we began with at the beginning of the sermon.] ...in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ... [and this is done how?] ...Having been buried with Him in baptism... [as we saw; joined into His death] ...by which you have also been raised with *Him* through the inner working of God, Who raised Him from the dead... [Because He says] ...For you, who were *once* dead in *your* sins and in the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has *now* made alive with Him... [that is made alive through the operation of coming out of the watery grave] ...having forgiven all your trespasses” (vs 11-13). Now, you can write in for our series in Colossians or the one I just did recently on Colossians 2, and that covers a little bit more in detail.

Now let’s go to Romans, the second chapter, please. Now Paul makes this circumcision of the heart and the Spirit very clear. Romans 2:28: “For he is not a Jew who *is one* outwardly, neither *is* that circumcision which *is* external in the flesh; Rather, he *is* a Jew... [that is a spiritual Jew of Jesus] ...who *is one* inwardly, and circumcision *is* of the heart, in the spirit *and* not in the letter; whose praise *is* not from men but from God” (vs 28-29). And that is a greater circumcision than the circumcision of the flesh.

Now, let’s answer the question: Should you be baptized again if you were baptized once? Because some people have been baptized into different churches. Let me just tell you this: If you’re baptized into a church which keeps Sunday, then your baptism was invalid, it doesn’t matter even if you were immersed in water the way baptism should be. Baptism by Baptists is not a valid baptism. Mormonism is not a valid baptism.

Now let’s come to Acts 19 and see what Paul said to those who were baptized unto the baptism of John. Acts 19:1: “Now it came to pass *that* while Apollos was in Corinth, Paul traveled through the upper parts *and* came to Ephesus; and when he found certain disciples, He said to them, ‘Did you receive *the* Holy Spirit after you believed?’... [Because the whole point of the matter is to receive the Holy Spirit. And if you haven’t received the Holy Spirit, any number of times you have been baptized are all false and fake baptisms.] ...And they said to him, ‘We have not even heard that *there* is a Holy Spirit.’ Then he said to them, ‘Unto what, then, were you baptized?’ And they said, ‘Unto the baptism of John.’ And Paul said, ‘John truly baptized *with* a baptism unto repentance, saying to the people that they should believe in Him Who was coming after him—that is, in Jesus, the Christ.’ And after hearing this, they were baptized

into the name of the Lord Jesus. Now when Paul laid *his* hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them..." (vs 1-6).

So that finishes the whole operation of baptism. When you are done you have hands laid on you for the receipt of the Holy Spirit and to receive the Holy Spirit is the whole purpose of baptism. Now you may have even had a false baptism within the Church of God. Because:

1. You didn't understand about baptism, or
2. You didn't repent truly from the heart. Maybe as it is in the Old Testament, maybe you rend your garments, but not your heart. And perhaps maybe the minister who did the baptism didn't have the faith in it; didn't believe in it; or perhaps had no consciousness of the true deep conversion that really needs to be.

So there are some cases when people need to be re-baptized—and I've re-baptized them. Sometimes they are baptized when they are too young and they come to a greater consciousness because God still is working with them. And then they are baptized and receive the Holy Spirit. And sometimes people just don't understand the basis of baptism when they're baptized and so they don't receive the Holy Spirit when they are baptized. Now, one other thing that's important: You not only must you repent, but ***you must also believe.***

Now let's come to Acts 8:37 and here's where Philip baptized the Ethiopian eunuch. "And Philip said, 'If you believe with all your heart ... [and that's what the whole thing is, your whole being] ... it is permitted' ... [it is lawful for you to be baptized (as it should read)]. ... Then he answered *and* said, 'I believe *that* Jesus Christ is the Son of God.'" Now you have to believe that to the very depth of your being and you grow in that, and you grow in the conviction, and you grow in the love of God, and you grow in the truth of God after baptism.

And so this is what baptism is all about: You bury the old self with the death of Christ, crucify the old self. You come out of the watery grave and you walk in newness of life. And you overcome the pulls of the flesh, growing in grace and knowledge through the power of the Holy Spirit and looking to Jesus Christ as your Head and your Lord and your Master to Whom you live and breath and have your being and confess your sins and worship and love. That is the meaning of baptism.

Scripture References:

- 1) Genesis 17:9-13

- 2) Deuteronomy 10:12-22
- 3) Deuteronomy 30:6
- 4) Romans 3:9-19
- 5) Matthew 3:1-12
- 6) Acts 2:36-37
- 7) Romans 2:4
- 8) John 6:44-45, 65
- 9) Acts 2:38
- 10) Matthew 28:19-20
- 11) Psalm 86:1-5
- 12) Psalm 103:1-4
- 13) John 3:16
- 14) Psalm 51:1-11
- 15) Romans 6:1-6
- 16) Luke 14:25-33
- 17) Matthew 10:37-39
- 18) John 14:6, 15, 21, 23-24
- 19) Colossians 3:1-3
- 20) Romans 7:9-14
- 21) 1 John 1:6-10
- 22) 1 John 2:1-6
- 23) 1 John 4:9-10
- 24) Colossians 2:11-13
- 25) Romans 2:28-29
- 26) Acts 19:1-6
- 27) Acts 8:37

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- 1 Timothy 1
- John 4
- Matthew 19
- John 14:15

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