

What Every Christian Ought to Know - Adrian Rogers

Believer's Baptism - Chapter 6

In Matthew 28:18-20, Jesus gives us the Great Commission. *18 Then Jesus came to them and said, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. 19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

This commission is not a wish or suggestion, it is a command. In this commission are actions that are required of us as believers. First, we are to "GO". Some churches are good at this step. Some fund missionaries to do the go step. Yet others say "Come".

If asked which kind of church we are, then I would say that we are a "Come" type church. We are great at funding the Burkeys, etc. to do the going. Or we are great at VBS or allowing others to come to our church. I feel that we are excellent at the second part of the Great Commission, the teaching. Once they come in we are equipped to educate them.

Rogers says that if a church is baptizing people because they are following Baptist or Methodist doctrine then they are doing it for the wrong reason. We should baptize others because Jesus commanded it.

Rogers says, "If what I show you is not in the Bible, then don't believe it. If it is in the Bible, say, "That is God's Word, and that's what I'm going to stand on."

Baptism doesn't save you, it is an outward expression of what is in your heart. However, baptism should not be minimized. Jesus commanded it so we must do it. Never think that it is something that we can take or leave out. There is only one kind of baptism in the Bible, that is immersion. Consider Mark 1:9-10. In verse 10, it says "*Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water*". This describes immersion.

I believe that there are times when something less is acceptable, if the person is physically unable to be immersed in water then I believe that it is acceptable. Consider the case of my brother-in-law, Rich. He wanted to be baptized but his health and dialysis ports prevented us from immersing him. His baptism was an example to his family that he belonged to Jesus.

Rogers says that every possibility should be exhausted to stand on conviction over convenience.

Another example of immersion in the Bible is Philip baptizing the Ethiopian in Acts 8:36-39. Philip baptized the Ethiopian by immersion. Verse 38 says that they “*went down into the water and Philip baptized him.*”

Rogers gives examples of baptism by immersion in the early church. Hippolytus preserved a baptismal creed in his writings, “When the person being baptized goes down into the water, he who baptizes him, putting his hand on him, shall say: ‘Do you believe in God, the Father Almighty? And the person being baptized shall say: ‘I believe.’”

Romans 6:4 says, “*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.*” Any other form of baptism except immersion would not make sense with this verse.

The book “Faith of Our Fathers” by James Cardinal Gibbons, states, “For several centuries after the establishment of Christianity, baptism was usually conferred by immersion, but since the twelfth century the practice of baptizing by affusion has prevailed in the Catholic Church, as this manner is attended with less inconvenience than baptism by immersion.”

Read Romans 6:4-7. Regarding verse 4, Guzik says, “But Paul’s point is clear: something dramatic and life-changing happened in the life of the believer. You can’t die and rise again without it changing your life. The believer has a real (although spiritual) death and resurrection with Jesus Christ.” You are dying to the old self and becoming as Paul said in 2 Corinthians 5:17, “a new creation”.

Paul says in these verses that when we were baptized we were crucified with Christ and just like Him, we are raised to life again. When Jesus died on the cross, it was to erase the sin debt once and for all. When you are baptized then you show everyone that you claim Him as your savior and that you will walk with Him as a new person.

1 Corinthians 15:3-4 tells us the Gospel message, “*Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures*”. When we accept Jesus as our savior then we accept that His gospel is true. When we are baptized, we connect our life with His life and we identify ourselves with His death, burial and resurrection.

Rogers says, “When I got baptized, it was just a funeral for the old Adrian. The old Adrian died and baptism pictured the burial of the old Adrian. The only mourner there was the devil. He hated to see me die, I was his good buddy. And so the old Adrian is dead and buried.”

The step before baptism is really important. You must be saved before you are baptized. It is important to understand what you are doing. You are claiming the death, burial and resurrection as factual, that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God and putting your faith in Jesus.

Acts 16:31-33 tells us the order of salvation. First, the jailer and his family heard the Gospel message from Paul and Silas. Then they told the jailer to “*believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and you will be saved . . . then immediately he and all his household were baptized.*”

Paul equates our baptism to the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Rogers points out that you can't bury a person with a small amount of dirt. It requires full immersion.

We have already covered that you don't get baptized because your parents want you to or because you reached a certain age. Rogers says that one gets baptized

because, “I believe in Jesus Christ. I identify myself with His death, burial and resurrection. I am not ashamed of Jesus.”

We are saying what Paul said in Romans 1:16, “*For I am not ashamed of the gospel, because it is the power of God that brings salvation to everyone who believes: first to the Jew, then to the Gentile.*” Without faith in Jesus then there is no salvation.

As I said earlier, the act of baptism does not save you. It is the outward expression of what you feel on the inside. You are saying, “I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God and I don’t care who knows it.”

Rogers says that it is like a wedding ring. It is a constant reminder that you are “married” to Christ. John MacArthur points out that there is one more step to the Gospel message and that is obedience. You will want to follow Him and do what God’s Word tells us.

Rogers says, “There is a Master to confess, there is a message to convey, there is a mandate to complete. God has commanded us to be baptized. . . . Anytime anybody anyplace calls upon Jesus in repentance and faith, they will be saved.”

I learned John 3:16 from the King James Version of the Bible. It says “*whosoever*” and that is anyone. It is not those that you approve of, it is anyone that God accepts and 2 Peter 3:9 is very clear. God wants everyone to come to repentance and salvation through the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.

Adrian Rogers defines a Biblical Baptism

The Method – Immersion

The Meaning – A picture of our identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus, which is the gospel.

The Motive for baptism is to confess Christ, obey Him and declare His saving gospel.