WHEN IS BAPTISM <u>NOT</u> NECESSARY?

(by George Battey)

QUESTION: **When is baptism not necessary?**

1)   <u>**New Testament baptism is not necessary if a person lived before the death of Jesus Christ.**</u>

   "For where there is a testament, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For ***a testament is in force after men are dead***, since it has no power at all while the testator lives" (Heb 9:16-17).

   This passage teaches the New Testament is like a will. The will of any man is enforced only after he dies, otherwise, *"it is of no strength at all"* while he lives. This explains why the men of the Old Testament did not have to be baptized to be saved. Men like Noah, Abraham, David and Daniel were not baptized to be saved, because they lived before the New Testament command for baptism was required.

   You may recall the thief on the cross was saved by Jesus without New Testament baptism. The reason for this is because New Testament baptism did not come into force until ***after*** Jesus died (Mt 28:19-20; Mk 16:15-16). The thief, of course, was saved ***before*** Jesus died.

2)   <u>**New Testament baptism is not necessary if the candidate is an infant or a small child.**</u>

   Infants and small children are innocent. They are guilty of no sin in the sight of God. They do not inherit the guilt for their parent's sins, and neither do they inherit Adam's sin. Since they inherit no sin, and they have not yet committed sin themselves, baptism is not necessary, because baptism is for the *"remission of sins."*

   "The soul who sins shall die. The son shall not bear the guilt of the father, nor the father bear the guilt of the son. ..." (Ezk 18:20). Jesus said, "Let the little children come to Me, and do not forbid them; for of such is the kingdom of heaven" (Mt 19:14). Both of these passages imply the innocence of children at birth.

   Little children are going to heaven without baptism because they are pure and innocent in the sight of God. Baptism is not necessary for them because they have no sins to *"wash away."*

3) New Testament baptism is not necessary if a person does not have sins.

"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" (Acts 2:38). "And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized**, and **wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

Since baptism is for the *"remission of sins"* and because it *"washes away"* sins, anyone who does not have sins is not a candidate for baptism. This is very significant. Most churches today teach alien sinners to pray for forgiveness or to "receive Jesus as your personal Savior." No passage in the entire New Testament teaches such a thing. Is that not amazing? Furthermore, denominations teach baptism is for a saved man who has already been forgiven. This is not true:

- *Baptism takes men who are outside of Christ and places them into Christ (Gal 3:27).*

- *Baptism takes a lost sinner and places him into the death of Christ so the blood of Jesus can wash away his sins (Rom 6:3).*

- *Baptism in water is the new birth which Jesus spoke of in John 3:5 and without it a man "cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven."*

- *Peter said plainly in 1 Pet 3:21, "baptism saves us."*

So baptism is not necessary if one has no sins. However, baptism **IS** necessary for all adults who wish to be saved by the blood of Christ. Baptism is the point in time when God takes the blood of Jesus and washes away the sins of the one being baptized (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Gal 3:26-27; Col 2:11-12; Tit 3:5).