
BIBLE TALK

This week the question is: ***If a man dies on the way to be baptized, will he die saved?***

Before giving a direct answer to this question, let me explain the implications behind this question. This question is asked by many people to evade the force of New Testament baptism.

1) The New Testament teaches that baptism is required for salvation:

Mark 16:16

¹⁶ "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; ...

Can any passage be plainer. Jesus said if a man wishes to be saved, he must believe AND be baptized. How can anyone teach that baptism is not essential when Jesus very plainly says that it is?

2) The New Testament teaches that baptism is "for the remission of sins."

Acts 2:38

³⁸ 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; ...

Is there any doubt as to what Peter said here? He says that baptism is just as essential as repentance. If a man can be saved without baptism, then he can also be saved without repentance. BUT, if repentance is absolutely necessary, then so is baptism. The apostle of Christ joined them together and said that the purpose for repenting and being baptized was "for the remission of sins."

3) The New Testament teaches that baptism washes away sins.

Acts 22:16

¹⁶ 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

This was spoken to Saul of Tarsus, who later became known as "the apostle Paul. This man, before he could become a Christian, and before he could become an apostle, and before he could be saved had to have his sins washed away. What did he have to do to have them washed away? He had to be baptized.

4) The New Testament teaches that baptism "saves us now."

1 Peter 3:20-21

²⁰ ... [in the days of Noah] eight souls, were saved through water.

²¹ There is also an antitype which now saves us; baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), ...

Here the apostle Peter himself declared that baptism in water "now saves us." Notice carefully that baptism is not to put away the "filth of the flesh," that is, it is not to cleanse our fleshly man. Rather, baptism gives men a "good conscience toward God." How can baptism in water give men a clear conscience toward God? Because baptism is the final step of obedience which washes away our sins. Baptism in water is the moment that a sinner's sins are removed by the blood of Christ. It is in baptism that the blood of the Lord washes away our sins. That's why the apostle Paul could write:

Romans 6:3-4

³ Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

⁴ Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

On and on we could go. Scripture after Scripture teaches that men today are saved when they are Scripturally baptized.

THE IMPLICATIONS OF THIS QUESTION

Now, to avoid the force of these Scriptures, many people ask the question: Suppose a man dies on the way to be baptized, will he be saved?

Now, why do you suppose that question is being asked? It is usually because a person has not been Scripturally baptized and he is trying desperately to justify himself! Some people reason like this:

- Suppose a man dies on the way to be baptized, wouldn't God save him anyway?
- And if God would save one man without baptism, then He would save others too.
- And if God will save all these people without baptism, then He will save me without baptism too!
- So I am not going to obey the Scriptures and get baptized!

Now, my friend, is that really not the rationale behind this question?

ANSWERING THE QUESTION

Suppose I admitted that God would indeed save a man who died on the way to being baptized, does that justify someone who is able to be baptized but simply refuses to do so?

My friend, if a sinner truly believed the Scriptures about baptism, if he honestly and sincerely believed that baptism was essential for the "washing away of" his sins and if he died on the way to be baptized "for the remission of his sins" . . . if God should save this man, how could anyone justify themselves for refusing to be baptized?

- Is dying while trying to obey God the same as refusing to obey God?
- Is the man who dies on the way to be baptized the same as the man who refuses to be baptized?

I must confess, if I had never been Scripturally baptized, this type of reasoning would not make me feel any better about myself! I would not feel any comfort by comparing myself to a hypothetical case that does not even resemble my own situation!!!

CONCLUSION

In closing, please let me point out some facts which no one in the whole world can deny:

- 1) There is no Scripture that says God will save people without baptism! There is no Scripture that says He will save a man who dies on the way to be baptized.
- 2) There is no record of this ever happening in the Scriptures, or in 2000 years worth of church history! Perhaps the reason there is no record of such a thing happening is because God graciously watches over men and allows them time to finish the obedience which they have begun!
- 3) There is an abundance of Scripture that teaches baptism is essential for salvation and we dare not lay it aside just merely to justify our own selves!

John 3:5

⁵ Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

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