

BAPTISM AND SALVATION

A DISCUSSION WITH A DISPENSATIONALIST

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and

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A DISCUSSION ABOUT BAPTISM AND SALVATION

John Waddey and Mark the Unknown

This Internet exchange developed when a reader named Mark read a piece I had written about salvation. Mark is a member of an evangelical body that holds a view that is called Dispensationalism, a variety of Premillennialism, the teaching that Christ will return to earth to reign for a thousand years. This approach to reading the Bible was developed by John Nelson Darby of England (1800-1882). In a speaking tour of America he persuaded a number of influential men to accept his views. Among them were C. I. Scofield and James M. Gray. Scofield's Reference Bible has been a best seller and has transmitted this mistaken view of Scripture to thousands of unsuspecting readers. Dispensationalism has also been popularized by popular writers such as Arno Gaebelein, Harry Ironside, Lewis S. Chafer, John Walvoord, Charles C. Ryrie and J. Dwight Pentecost. Dallas Theological Seminary is the American fountainhead for this strange doctrine. Dispensationalism makes a sharp distinction between the kingdom of Christ and his church. It also argues that the New Testament must be divided into its Jewish and its Gentile messages. Those portions written for Jews offered a kingdom which they rejected. They do not apply to Gentile Christians whom they say are living under grace. They wave aside the teachings of the Gospels, the first 13 chapters of Acts and the writings of Peter, James, John and Jude as not applicable to us today. Rather than helping one understand God's message, this humanly devised system leads only to chaos and confusion. JHW

Dear Mr. Waddey: Baptism is not necessary for salvation. Cornelius was saved before he was baptized (Acts 10:44-48). **Mark**

Dear Mark: How do you know Cornelius was saved before he was baptized? What verse says that? If he was saved before baptism then Jesus must have been mistaken when he said, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16) Was Peter mistaken when he told the Jews who ask "What must we do?" to Repent and be baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38)?

God sent the Holy Spirit on Cornelius and his family, enabling them to speak in tongues in order to demonstrate to Peter and the Jewish brethren that Gentiles were to be accepted into the church just as Jews were. Compare Acts 11:16-18.

To properly understand God's Word, we must not first make up our minds about what we believe and then seek for Scripture to prove that. We must read all that God says on a given subject and accept it. That is faith!

John Waddey

Dear John: Mark 16:16 is too disputed a text to base such an important doctrine on. The two oldest manuscripts, Aleph (Codex Sinaiticus) and B (Codex Vaticanus) do not contain verses 9-20. Nor does K (Latin ms) along with the Sinaitic Syriac. Nine of the ten Armenian versions omit it as well as the older Ethiopic manuscripts. Victor of Antioch, who wrote the earliest commentary on Mark, ends at verse 8. Jerome and Eusebius both state that in nearly all the earliest manuscripts that the longer ending (Mark 16:9-20) is missing. Quite simply, you can not base such an important doctrine (salvation) on such a highly disputed passage. One must look elsewhere. In terms of the internal evidence as to why this section is to be rejected is found in Mark 16:14. Here Jesus is said to have "upbraided" (oneidizo) the apostles. This is incredibly strong and unlike the character of the post resurrected Christ as reported in the other gospels concerning His apostles. In fact, Mark uses this word to describe what the enemies of Christ engaged in against Him (Mark 15:32). Christ would not do to His apostles what His enemies did to Him.

Baptism is not necessary for salvation. Cornelius was saved before he was baptized. There are two reasons why we know Cornelius was saved before being baptized. 1. Cornelius received the Holy Spirit before being baptized. That he had the Holy Spirit 1 John 4:13 states that he abided in God and that God abided in him. To abide in God and to have God abide in you describes one who is already a believer not an unbeliever. One can not have God Almighty (the Holy Spirit) abiding in them and still be a child of the devil (unsaved). To have the Holy Spirit means that one is already saved. Such was the

case of Cornelius before he was baptized. 2. The gift of tongues was given to those who were already believers not to unbelievers (1 Corinthians 12:10). Cornelius is said to have spoke in tongues before he was baptized (Acts 10:46, 48). Therefore Cornelius was already saved before being baptized. In relation to point #1, every time in Acts someone spoke in tongues they had already received the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:4; 10:44-48; 19:6). - Not all believers spoke in tongues (1 Corinthians 12:30) but those who did were already saved. Also those who have the gift of tongues are said to be already "in the church" (1 Corinthians 12:28) that is Christ's body (Colossians 1:24). Cornelius then was already "in" the church and Christ's body before he was baptized. Let it be further noted that in the days prior to Pentecost the Holy Spirit came upon and empowered both the saved and the unsaved (including a donkey) to carry out God's will. However it is after Pentecost (John 7:37-39) that the Holy Spirit permanently indwelt only those who were believers not unbelievers (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; 1 John 4:13). The "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 10:45 is the same "gift of the Holy Spirit" in Acts 2:38.

1. The same phrase - Peter states that it is the "same gift" (Acts 11:17).
2. The same author (Luke).
3. The same speaker (Peter).
4. The same book (Acts).
5. The same context (the theme of Christ's Lordship/resurrection to unsaved people).
6. The same response (acceptance).

The same phrase, by the same author, by the same speaker, in the same book, in the same context with the same response but two different meanings? Very improbable. In terms of the eunuch, in Acts 8:37 he states that "Jesus Christ is the Son of God." According to 1 John 4:15 he was already abiding in God and God was abiding in him before he was baptized.

Also according to 1 Peter 1:18, 19 we are not redeemed with corruptible things but in the precious blood of the Lamb which is incorruptible. Water though is a corruptible thing (people vomit in it, dogs urinate in it). Therefore the "water" of baptism does not redeem since it is by its very nature corruptible.

Mark

Dear Mark: If the status of the text of Mark 16:9-20 is so tenuous, would you be willing to removed it from your Bible? If it is so untrustworthy, can you explain why the translators of virtually every translation ever published have included it in the text. Yes, it is bracketed and footnoted. Yes, several older manuscripts do not contain it, yet the consensus of believing scholars and translators is that it is genuine and belongs in the text. The question is just where to place it. Even if Mark 16:16 is surrendered you still must deal with Peter's response to the Jews in Acts 2 and Ananias' words to Saul, "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins...." (Acts 22:16).

Would Cornelius have been saved had he refused to be baptized? Why?

Why did Peter command him to be baptized?

The Holy Spirit fell upon Cornelius and his family "*as Peter began to speak.*" (Acts 11:15). Per your logic he was saved at that moment. But looking back at the sermon Peter preached (Acts 10:34ff), Cornelius would have been saved before he learned about Jesus being the Son of God, his death burial and resurrection and the necessity of faith in him (vs. 43). Hence following your line of reasoning we can be saved today without that fundamental knowledge on which to base our faith. Right?

Perhaps you could explain why you harbor such a strong aversion to Christian baptism? Christ was baptized as were his apostles. All early Christians were baptized. It is a command of the Lord (Acts 10:48). It puts us into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27). It is the likeness of the death, burial and resurrection of Christ which every person reenacts in his conversion (Rom. 6:3-5). It is a lovely thing that every Christian should honor and appreciate out of respect for the Lord who gave it.

By the way no knowledgeable Christian believes or teaches that the saving power is the water. The blood of Jesus, God's Son cleanses us from all sin (1 John 1:7). The question is where and when do we receive the redeeming cleansing by that blood? Ananias' understanding was "Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins" (Acts 22:16).

John Waddey

John: The Acts 2:38 and 22:16 passages only refer to the Jews associated with the baptismal ministries of John and Jesus. In order to attain the forgiveness of rejecting and crucifying their Messiah they needed to repent and be baptized. It was then they would receive the Holy Spirit. Cornelius (a Gentile) received the Holy Spirit before his baptism. It is in Cornelius that Luke demonstrates the normative pattern of how Gentiles are to receive the Holy Spirit. That is through their faith alone apart from water baptism. In fact, when Paul recollects his conversion experience it is to the Jews in the Temple that he relates the necessity of baptism (Acts 22:16) but to King Agrippa (the Gentile audience) in Acts 26 baptism is not at all mentioned. This is not to say that these Jews are saved any different from the Gentiles. All are saved by grace through faith. God temporarily withheld the Holy Spirit from them until they were baptized. They were however justified before this time. They already accepted that Jesus is the Christ before they were baptized. This in itself would be regenerating (1 John 5:1).

The Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27 passages actually demonstrate that baptism comes after salvation. 1 Corinthians 10:2 reads that they were "baptized into Moses" (eis Moses) in that the Israelites identified with Moses even though they had already accepted his leadership before the Red Sea (Exodus 12:21, 28, 35, 50). We are "baptized into (eis) Jesus Christ". This shows our public identification with Him. Like with the Israelites already accepting Moses as their leader before their baptism in the Red Sea so too Christians have already accepted Jesus as their leader (Savior) before their baptism in water. In terms of Galatians 3:27, notice it says that those who "have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ." The word "put on" is the Greek word "enduo". This same word is used for those who are already Christians in Romans 13:14. They are told to "put on" (enduo) Christ even though they are already saved. The same holds true for Galatians 3:27. Those who are already saved also "put on" (enduo) Christ at their baptism.

Also, why dogmatically assume that the baptism in Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27 is a physical baptism and not a spiritual one? 1 Corinthians 12:13 speaks of a spiritual not a physical baptism. "Baptized" is not literal anymore than "body". Both are spiritual. "Drink" is also spiritual. Paul uses the same terminology both in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:28 (this would apply to Romans 6:3 for both have the exact same expression "baptized into Christ"): 1 Corinthians 12:13 Jews Greeks slaves free Galatians 3:28 Jew Greek slave free Given the above evidence there is good reason to believe that they are spiritual baptisms not physical ones.

Yes if Cornelius would have refused baptism he would still be saved. The text reads that he already spoke in the NT gift of tongues and that he already "received" the Spirit. If had refused it would have been a sin. Christians can and do sin. Do you? Baptism is a visible sign that one has entered into the NT church.

1 Peter 1:18, 19 make it clear that no corruptible thing can redeem us. Water is a corruptible thing so therefore has no redemptive value. **Mark**

John: In terms of Acts 11:15, Peter simply did not finish everything he had to say but enough was said whereby Cornelius and those with him were saved. You have to remember that Peter's messages of the gospel were quite lengthy. In Acts 2 he spoke from verse 14-36, 38-40. Plus "many other words" (v.40). Then in Acts 3:12-26 he was stopped from speaking even more because of his arrest. (He was also stopped in 4:8-12, 15 and 5:19-21, 26 as well as in 5:29-32, 34). In fact, it seems clear that whenever the gospel message was preached they were all considerably long (Acts 8:12, 35; and 16:32 we simply don't know the length). Stephen spoke a long time in Acts 7:2-55, 56, 59-60. His lengthy proclamation was abruptly stopped because the Jews killed him. In Acts 13:16-41 Paul and Barnabas spoke. In verse 43 they still continued speaking even after the service. They returned the next week to the same synagogue to preach more (v.44) in which they were eventually driven out of the district (v.50). In Acts 22:1-22 Paul was stopped because of the uproar of the crowd. In Acts 28:23 Paul spoke from morning to evening- a long time! Peter's preaching to Cornelius was very short. From the examples just given the evidence demonstrates that he was just beginning to speak for his style of preaching was considerably much longer (Acts 2). Specifically, the "began" in Acts 11:15 need not be pressed. For we are told that Peter was to speak words (plural) whereby they would be saved (v.14). If the Holy Spirit came as soon as Peter began to speak then he wouldn't even have had the chance to speak the "words" that were necessary in order for them to be saved. This would then be contrary to Romans 10:17 where it is absolutely necessary to hear the gospel first and then believe/receive the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13). God works persuasively not coercively. "Began" then can be understood as a pleonasm

in that it serves to emphasize the falling of the Holy Spirit over against Peter's sermon. For it was not so much what Peter said that Luke wished to emphasize but what the Holy Spirit accomplished. The same is true concerning the fact that Jesus "began" to teach in the synagogue (Mark 6:2). Mark's intention is to demonstrate Jesus' authority by the reaction of the crowd. The content of His message, as found in Luke 4:18-21, is secondary. Even Thayer in his Greek-English Lexicon (pages 78+79) lists Acts 11:15 under a number of passages in which he states "that a thing was but just begun when it was interrupted by something else." He then comments on Matthew 12:1, Matthew 26:22 and Mark 6:2. Below are his comments followed by mine:

"they had begun to pluck ears of corn, but they were prevented from continuing by the interference of the Pharisees." Some ears of corn were plucked before the Pharisees interrupted (my comment).

"Jesus answered before all had finished." Some did finish before Jesus answered (my comment).

"he had scarcely begun to teach, when a multitude gathered unto him." He was able to do some teaching before the multitude arrived (my comment).

So it is concerning Acts 11:15 (10:44). Peter was able to preach just a small amount of his intended message before Cornelius believed and the Holy Spirit descended. Enough was proclaimed whereby Cornelius could be saved: Approaching God in humility 10:35 The deity of the Lord Jesus 10:36 His death on the cross 10:39 His resurrection 10:40 His authority to judge 10:42 Believing in Him brings forgiveness of sins 10:43

Take for example if my friend was describing to me the sermon that he had preached the previous day. He tells me, "As I began to preach, the Holy Spirit convicted my congregation." It wouldn't make any sense to conclude that the conviction took place before he spoke or just after a few short words of his. Rather, like Peter's description (especially based on Acts 10:34-43), I would believe that my friend intended to convey that the Holy Spirit's conviction occurred during the initial stages of his sermon. What Peter began he simply did not conclude. Happy New Year to you as well

Mark

Dear Mark: I am enjoying our discussion. It is evident that you have spent much time in study of your doctrine, but you have failed to correctly understand God's message to you.

You labor long and hard to persuade yourself that Cornelius was saved before and without water baptism, but to no avail. He was commanded to be baptized (Acts 10:48). The same Holy Spirit that led Peter to say those words led him early to explain it was "for remission of sins" (Acts 2:38). He led Ananias to say it was to "wash away sins" (Acts 22:16). Inspiration of the Bible guarantees that there is no contradiction in the message delivered.

You should note that Holy Spirit baptism did not save the apostles. It empowered them to act on behalf of the Lord. It inspired them with their message. It demonstrated to the Jews that the apostles were sent by God (Acts 1:8; 2:4; 2:11).

Neither did Holy Spirit baptism save Cornelius. It was given to him and his family to visibly show Peter, the other apostles and the Jewish brethren that God wanted Gentiles to be saved and brought into the kingdom just as they (Jews) had been (Acts 10:34-35, 47; 11:16-18).

Neither have you received Holy Spirit baptism. Was there a rushing of a mighty wind? Did cloven tongues of fire rest upon you? Did you speak in foreign languages you had not previously studied or learned and could folks from foreign nations understand you in their own language wherein they were born? (Acts 2:1-8).

A careful reading of the record shows that (a.) The apostles and Cornelius received Holy Spirit baptism; (Certain leaders of the early church received a secondary impartation of the Spirit when an apostle laid his hand upon him (Acts 8:14-18). This enabled them to perform some signs and wonders and speak in unknown languages. (c.) All Christians receive the gift of the Holy Spirit when they are baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of their sins (Acts 2:38). The many New Testament verses that speak about the Holy Spirit and the Christian refer to this indwelling which is described as

the seal of our salvation and the earnest of our inheritance in heaven (Eph. 1:13-14). If these distinctions are not observed confusion will be the result.

I take it you must subscribe to some form of Dispensational theology as you imagine two separate gospels for Jews and for Gentiles. Yet Paul makes it abundantly clear that there is Only one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and God the Father (Eph. 4:4-5). Paul warned that God's anathema would rest on anyone who taught a different gospel than he taught (Gal. 1:8-9).

You say that baptism for forgiveness of sins was only for Jews who had reject and murdered Christ. Gentiles were saved by faith alone. Yet the Corinthians hearing, believed and were baptized (Acts 18:8). When Paul discovered that twelve disciples in Ephesus had not received the Holy Spirit, he knew there was a flaw in their conversion. He further taught them and they were baptized into the name of Jesus. Only then did they receive the Holy Spirit (Acts 19:1-7).

Your statement that "It is in Cornelius that Luke demonstrates the normative pattern of how Gentiles are to receive the Holy Spirit by faith alone apart from water baptism" is interesting but without Scriptural basis. What verse do you cite to prove this?

Equally without foundation is your suggestion that Rom. 6:3-5 and Gal. 3:26 refer to a "spiritual baptism" rather than an actual baptism in water. A basic rule of Biblical interpretation is that words should be taken at their face value unless the context demands a figurative meaning. Similarly your statement that these verses demonstrate that baptism comes after salvation is fanciful. Think of it this way. One cannot hope to go to heaven unless he has "put on Christ." But one puts on Christ when he is baptized into Christ (Gal. 3:26). Hence one cannot hop to go to heaven until he has been baptize into Christ.

You say that Cornelius could have refused to obey the divine command to be baptized and yet be saved, yet James says "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet stumble in one point, he is become guilty of all" (Jas. 2:10). Jesus said "Not everyone that saith unto me Lord, Lord shall enter into the kingdom of heave; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 7:21). Do you believe this?

John Waddey

Hi John: You say Cornelius was commanded to be baptized. Of course. It is one of the first things a person does AFTER they are saved. The fact that Cornelius had the Holy Spirit before he was baptized DOES show that he was already saved. What your saying is that even though he had the Spirit he was still lost. That means if he died and went to hell that God would be in hell with him. That is impossible. Rather, he was saved when he "received" the Spirit and that BEFORE he was baptized.

Also 1 Corinthians 12:28 is clear. Only those "IN" the body of Christ have the NT gift of tongues. Not for those "out" of the body but for those "IN" it. Thus by having the NT gift of tongues Cornelius was already "IN" the body of Christ and that before his baptism.

Mark

Dear Mark: You say that baptism "is one of the first things a person does AFTER they are saved." Consider the way the inspired writers saw this:

* Jesus said, He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved" (Mark 16:16).

* Peter said, "Repent ye and be baptized for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:28).

* Ananias told Saud to "arise and be baptized and wash away they sins" (Acts 22:16).

* Paul wrote to the Corinthians, "Ye were washed (i.e. baptized), but ye were sanctified, but ye were justified ..." (I Cor. 6:11).

All of these teachers, guided by the Holy Spirit placed baptism before salvation. You place it after. To which should I give heed?

You reject my position that Cornelius was saved only when he was baptized (Acts 10:48). To make your point you said, my position implies that "even though he had the Spirit he was still lost. That means if he died and went to hell that God would be in hell with him." My friend you do err, not knowing the Scripture. When God sends his Holy Spirit into the heart of a person, it is not automatically for ever. Whether or not the Spirit stays with a person depends on whether or not he remains faithful to God. Listen to David's mournful prayer, "Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy Holy Spirit from me" (Ps. 51:11). God's Spirit departed from wicked King Saul (I Sam. 16:14). Thus if one receives God's Holy Spirit and does not remain faithful to him, the Spirit departs from him. If the person is lost in hell, the Spirit is not there with him. In Paul's words, he is severed from Christ (Gal. 5:4). In Num. 24:2 we read that the Spirit of God came upon the sinful prophet Balaam and turned his curses into blessings for Israel. If he could demonstrate God's power on an evil man like Balaam, surely He could demonstrate to Peter and the Jewish brethren that God wanted them to accept Cornelius the Gentile into the family of God.

I do read in I Cor. 12:28 that "God hath set some in the church" including "divers kinds of tongues" but I do not see the word "Only" that you emphasize. Is that in your translation? If you should save that the miraculous gift of speaking in foreign languages was given to some in the early church I would agree. But when you add the word "only" to escape the possibility that Cornelius received the gift to prove he was acceptable to God, I must dissent.

John Waddey

John: No it is you who is in error. During the days prior to Pentecost the Spirit came upon and empowered individuals to carry out God's will. However it was AFTER Pentecost that He permanently abided in them. Also we are discussing how to receive the Spirit not if one can lose him. In fact Ephesians 4:30 is VERY clear: once we are sealed by the Spirit it is to the day of redemption.

Of course I can say "only" given to believers in terms of the NT gift of tongues. There are two groups of people saved and unsaved. If one is canceled out that leaves ONLY one. The fact is it is the NT gift of tongues is given to those "IN" the church not "out" of it but in it ONLY in it. Cornelius had the NT gift of tongues making him a member of the body of Christ and that BEFORE he was baptized.

Mark 16:16

This is too disputed of a text to base such an important doctrine on. The two oldest manuscripts, Aleph (Codex Sinaiticus) and B (Codex Vaticanus) do not contain verses 9-20. Nor does K (Latin mss) along with the Sinaitic Syriac. Nine of the ten Armenian versions omit it as well as the older Ethiopic manuscripts. Victor of Antioch who wrote the earliest commentary on Mark ends at verse 8. Jerome and Eusebius both state that in nearly all the earliest manuscripts that the longer ending (Mark 16:9-20) is missing. Quite simply, you can not base such an important doctrine (salvation) on such a highly disputed passage. One must look elsewhere.

Acts 2:38 and 22:16

These passages only refer to the Jews associated with the baptismal ministries of John and Jesus. In order to attain the forgiveness of rejecting and crucifying their Messiah they needed to repent and be baptized. It was then they would receive the Holy Spirit. Cornelius (a Gentile) received the Holy Spirit before his baptism. It is in Cornelius that Luke demonstrates the normative pattern of how Gentiles are to receive the Holy Spirit. That is through their faith alone apart from water baptism. In fact, when Paul recollects his conversion experience it is to the Jews in the Temple that he relates the necessity of baptism (Acts 22:16) but to King Agrippa (the Gentile audience) in Acts 26 baptism is not at all mentioned. This is not to say that these Jews are saved any different from the Gentiles. All are saved by grace through faith. God temporarily withheld the Holy Spirit from them until they were baptized. They were however justified before this time. They already accepted that Jesus is the Christ before they were baptized. This in itself would be regenerating (1 John 5:1).

Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27

These passages actually demonstrate that baptism comes after salvation. 1 Corinthians 10:2 reads that they were "baptized into Moses" (eis Moses) in that the Israelites identified with Moses even though they had already accepted his leadership before the Red Sea (Exodus 12:21, 28, 35, 50). We are "baptized into (eis) Jesus Christ". This shows our public identification with Him. Like with the Israelites already accepting Moses as their leader before their baptism in the Red Sea so too Christians have already accepted Jesus as their leader (Savior) before their baptism in water. In terms of Galatians 3:27, notice it says that those who "have been baptized into Christ have put

on Christ." The word "put on" is the Greek word "enduo". This same word is used for those who are already Christians in Romans 13:14. They are told to "put on" (enduo) Christ even though they are already saved. The same holds true for Galatians 3:27. Those who are already saved also "put on" (enduo) Christ at their baptism.

Also, why dogmatically assume that the baptism in Romans 6:3 and Galatians 3:27 is a physical baptism and not a spiritual one? 1 Corinthians 12:13 speaks of a spiritual not a physical baptism. "Baptized" is not literal anymore than "body". Both are spiritual. "Drink" is also spiritual. Paul uses the same terminology both in 1 Corinthians 12:13 and Galatians 3:28 (this would apply to Romans 6:3 for both have the exact same expression "baptized into Christ"): 1 Corinthians 12:13 Jews Greeks slaves free Galatians 3:28 Jew Greek slave free Given the above evidence there is good reason to believe that they are spiritual baptisms not physical ones.

1 Corinthians 12:13

'Baptized' is not literal anymore than 'body'. Both are spiritual. 'Drink' is also spiritual along with the rest of the chapter.

Ephesians 4:5

One visible baptism which is an analogy of the invisible. There are two forms under one baptism not two baptisms. The one baptism is composed of the inward element and the outward seal.

Colossians 2:11, 12

Water baptism is the circumcision of the New Testament. Circumcision symbolizes purification from defilement. It's a sign not a cause of the remission of sins. Abraham was justified before his circumcision (Romans 4:10, 11) just as believers are justified before their baptism.

Titus 3:5

There is no definite article before washing and renewing. Kai (and) can be used exegetically. The text could read "washing of regeneration even (kai) renewal of the Holy Spirit".

Hebrews 10:22

Water can represent the Word of God (Ephesians 5:26). Without the Word of God no one can be born again (1 Peter 1:23). Another way to look at this passage is that the blood stands for our justification (Romans 5:9) while water represents our justification (2 Corinthians 7:1).

1 Peter 3:21

The ark is a type of Christ while the flood represents baptism. Before the waters came they were already in the Ark. Likewise, before one is baptized one is already in Christ. To be "in Christ" is the spiritual condition of a believer not an unbeliever. Baptism saves in a figure. The Ark and Christ compared:

The Ark was provided before the catastrophe so was Christ (Revelation 13:8). The Ark provided deliverance to Noah. Christ provides deliverance (salvation) to us. God revealed the Ark to Noah. God reveals Christ to us (2 Corinthians 4:6). They were told to "come" to the Ark not "go". The same with Christ (Matthew 11:28-30). The window of the Ark was "above". That is where we should be looking and living for Christ (Colossians 3:3). The Ark was made of wood (Genesis 6:14). Christ was the root out of the dry ground (Isaiah 53:2), a Branch (Zechariah 3:8), He was cut off (Daniel 9:26). The Ark was "pitched" (kopher) inside and out (Genesis 6:14). It had no value without this covering. This same word "kopher" is used to describe the atonement because of the blood of Christ alone (Leviticus 17:11). Inside the Ark one was saved from God's wrath. The same with Christ (John 3:36). The Ark had one door and God shut it (Genesis 7:16). When one receives Christ he/she is eternally secure (Ephesians 1:13, 4:30; Colossians 3:3).

Mark

Dear Mark: Do you have the Holy Spirit given gift of tongues? If not is that proof that you do not have the Holy Spirit?

Your position, that once one has received the Holy Spirit, it is "to the day of redemption" makes it clear that you believe that once one is saved he can under no circumstances be lost? Right? Yet Scriptures tells us that one can be "severed from Christ" and be "fallen away from grace" (Gal. 5:4). The promise that the Holy Spirit is the earnest and seal to all those

who remain faithful to Christ. Hence Jesus says, "Be thou faithful unto death and I will give thee the crown of life" (Rev. 2:10).

Much of what you have to say about baptism you said in your earlier letters. But I ask you once more have you removed Mark 16:9-20 from your Bible? Do you deny that any part of it is God's Word. Why have all translators continued to place it in the text? If you are correct it should be discarded.

You labor hard and long to prove that the Bible does not mean what it says about how man is saved. Your vision is clouded by your Dispensational theology. One will never arrive at a correct understand of God's Word if he first posits his theological doctrine and then goes to the Bible to make it prove his point. Distortion will be the result.

Your distinction between the way Jews and Gentiles were saved is not found in Scripture; nor is your artificial separation of New Testament teaching into parts for Jews and parts for Gentiles. It is contrived. No person, unfamiliar with your doctrine, would ever discover it just by sitting down and reading his Bible. He would have to have someone implant that in his mind.

You go to great lengths to show that Paul's references to our baptism are to be understood spiritually or figuratively. By what standard or canon would one be able to tell when the word is figurative and when it is literal? When Jesus was baptized by John was it a figurative experience? When Ananias told Paul to arise and be baptized was he suggesting that he look for a metaphor? The fact is, to properly understand God's Word, all words should be taken at their literal definition unless the context demands otherwise. The context of the passages you mentions makes no such demand. To uphold your doctrine you must try to escape the clear teaching of such passages. Only by spiritualizing them can you do so.

Your interpretation of the Ark and the flood is fanciful. If assertions prove a point you would make it. Unfortunately we must have more than that. The first rule for interpreting analogies is that you look for the one primary point of comparison the author is making. Peter does not say that the Ark represents Christ. He says nothing about the other details you imagine. He does say that the "eight souls were saved through water" which also after a true likeness doth now save you, even baptism..." The NIV translates this "eight in all, were saved through water, and this water symbolizes baptism that now save you..." (1 Pet. 3:21). The same water that destroyed the wicked, saved Noah and his family by floating their ark away from the destruction. Even so baptism saves us. The saving power is the blood of Christ (1 John 1:7). Baptism is not to wash away dirt from our bodies. It is God's appointed ordinance wherein the believing, penitent sinner is united with Christ (Rom. 6:3-5) and his sins are washed away (Acts 22:16). Those who truly love Christ will believe his word and submit to his commands (John 14:15). They will be saved.

I challenge you to take up your New Testament; one without your previous notations and read from Matthew onward. Try to do so as if you had never seen or heard of it before. Let the living words sink into your heart. Take them as you would any other serious book. If you will do so, you will see simple, unadorned Christianity unfolding before your eyes. You will need no course in theology. You can understand its message without your Greek lexicon. By accepting its simple message you will be a Christian in the same sense as were those earliest disciples of Jesus. May God bless and keep you.

John Waddey

John: No, I don't have the NT gift of tongues - not all do (1 Corinthians 12:30). BUT those who did have this gift like Cornelius were already "IN" the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:28). I noticed you never really answered Ephesians 4:30 but instead just threw 2 other Scripture at me. Revelation 2:10: Yes all those who are saved will be faithful. Sorry Mike the text of Mark 16:9-20 is not found in the earliest mss. Jerome and Eusebius state that in nearly all of the copies they had it wasn't there. Victor of Antioch who wrote the first known commentary on Mark ends at verse 8. How about we "pretend" that they do belong in the text. Respond to this: Mark 16:17 states that the saved will speak in the NT gift of tongues. Now we have three examples that Cornelius was saved BEFORE he was baptized. The fact is that I don't need this spurious text. I already have both 1 Corinthians 12:10 and 12:28 to easily prove my point which for some reason you can't see (See Job 33:12-14).

Mike, it is clear that the Jews received the Spirit AFTER being baptized. It is also equally clear that the Gentiles receive

the Spirit BEFORE being baptized. Is that a contradiction? No. One applies to Jews and one to Gentiles (you and I). Those in the flood were already saved in the ark while those IN CHRIST (ark) are already saved before the waters of baptism. My name is Marc and I am a Christian (not a pastor).

Mark

Dear Mark: So long as you read Scripture through the tinted lense of your Dispensational theology you will fail to understand it properly.

Your determination to discredit Mark 16:9-20 flies in the face of all the Bible translators, who have continued to place those verses in their editions of Mark. Do you know more than they? The question is not were there some who did not know it? But is there sufficient evidence to reject it. Only those whose theology is embarrassed by it are so determined.

You rightly acknowledge that you do not have the gift of tongues. You do not possess any of the supernatural gifts of the Spirit mentioned in I Cor. 12: 4-11. Nor does anyone else today. Until you recognize the different manifestations of the Holy Spirit mentioned in the New Testament, you will be confused about the role of the Spirit in relation to salvation. Holy Spirit baptism was only experienced twice; by the apostles on Pentecost and by Cornelius. In neither case was it to save them. It empowered the apostles for their great mission (Acts 1:8) and it demonstrated that God was speaking through them, thus they must be heard and respected. In the case of Cornelius it demonstrated to the Apostles, that God had opened the door of salvation to Gentiles as well as them and they must be accepted into the church (Acts 11:15-18). The apostles imparted some gifts of the Spirit to some disciples to assist in the leadership of the infant church (Acts 8:14-17). Every believer who repents and is baptized in the name of Jesus for the remission of his sins receives "the gift of the Holy Spirit." This is a non-miraculous indwelling that brings with it many blessings but no supernatural powers (Acts 2:38).

Your separate plans of salvation for Jews and Gentiles cannot be squared with Eph. 4:4-5. There is one body, one faith, one baptism just as there is one Father, Son and Spirit. The same gospel was preached to all the nations...including Jews (Matt. 28:19-20). Paul wrote to the Gentiles in Galatia, that if any man preached a different gospel than that which he preached he would be anathema (Gal. 1:8-9). But you say a different gospel was preached to Jews. Do you preach a different gospel to Jews today? Are you at risk of Paul's dire warning?

While I have enjoyed our exchange, I don't care to proceed if you are not willing to identify yourself. I close with a prayer that the eyes of your heart might be enlightened (Eph. 1:18), that you might be able to see and understand the glorious gospel of Lord. May you like Apollos of old, embrace the simple truths of non-denominational Christianity and boldly preach them in ever place. With best wishes I am,

Yours in Christ,
John Waddey

End