

The Covenant of Baptism

Scripture reading: John 3:3-8, Matthew 3:11

Have you ever thought of what baptism really is? Baptism is a covenant that the believer makes with God. It is permanent. It is a death, a burial, and a resurrection. The thing that dies is not the thing that rises. The thing that rises is a Christ thing. The man's heart, his mind, his soul, and his behavior must change radically. It is not "Oh, I got changed yesterday." No sir, it is a continuous change, a gradual change. The ugly caterpillar goes into a chrysalis and changes, changes, changes, until he undergoes his metamorphosis and becomes a beautiful butterfly. Until that day, the change is yet continuing, or should continue.

However, this change is arrested, retarded, or stopped by some of the church doctrines that we have. The believer is no longer functioning under God, for he has not made CHRIST HIS LORD. Jesus is my Saviour, oh yes. I did not have to do anything. All I needed to be saved by Jesus was to be a sinner which I did not do; I was born that way. Born a sinner, Jesus saves you, and now you must turn around and make a covenant with Him that you will follow Him all the way. That is baptism. Outside of this, there is no baptism. You could be wet with water until you continuously drip. You will not be baptized unless that consciousness has come to you.

Some of you have been baptized and feel if you go down in the name of Jesus (someone said "Jesus" over you) and come up again, you are made perfect. You are mistaken. Those of you who believe that you are baptized to become a member of a church and get the right hand of fellowship when you are baptized, YOU ARE NOT BAPTIZED. You must make the covenant with God and then go down in the water. That is baptism and you must know what you are doing. Baptism has the following three steps: Water, Holy Spirit, and Christ. Man baptizes you in water, Jesus baptizes you in the Holy Spirit, and the Holy Spirit baptizes you into Christ. That brings you into the holy place.

There is the outer court, the holy place, and then you are still going on further. You are going into the holy of holies where the overshadowing of God will deliver you from all harm. Psalm 91:1 says, "*He that dwelleth in the secret place of the most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty.*" You will go into the ark of the covenant, where you become a permanent part of God.

(Excerpt from *The Book of Revelation*, Volume 2, pg. 4-5)

Thought for today: Baptism is a covenant that requires continual change until our metamorphosis is complete and we are fully changed into the image and likeness of God.