

### Prayer List

Gene  
Judy  
The Williams' Family  
Ophelia

### Services:

#### Sunday

Bible Class 9:00 a.m.  
Assembly 9:50 a.m.  
Assembly 6:00 p.m.

#### Wednesday

Bible Class 7:00 p.m.

# *Pinole Tidings*

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## **Some Thoughts On Baptism**

The atmosphere of many a religious conversation has become charged or else died as a result of someone having introduced the subject of baptism. Most religious leaders today see baptism as a voluntary action, not one not necessary to salvation. They pass along to their followers such thinking. To even question the doctrine that a man is saved by faith alone is offensive to them.

Men will appeal to almost anything when their religious ideas are called into question. For instance, when the subject of baptism is introduced, the immediate reaction is to cite all the passages in the New Testament where faith is used as the necessary element in salvation, while giving no credence at all to the fact that there are also numbers of passages in the text connecting baptism with salvation. Do they militate against one another? Far be it from me to question anyone's honesty, but it would seem that any person seeking all the truth would want to consider all the Bible has to say on that subject.

Baptism is used in Scripture to relate man to the forgiveness of God. First, as it relates to all the saved people, the

### Elders:

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### This Week's Question:

What kind of flowers were supposed to be carved into the sacred lampstands?

### Answer To Last Week's Question:

Samson - Judges 14:14

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church. Ephesians 5:26-27 says, “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word.” Titus 3:5 attests to the same fact: “Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of water by the word.” Scripture also refers to baptism as necessary for salvation for the individual. In Mark 16:15-16, Jesus told his apostles, “Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.” Saul of Tarsus was told by the preacher, “and now why tarriest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” (Acts 22:16). To deny that baptism is spoken of in Scripture as being involved with salvation is to deny the obvious.

Now these passages have not negated faith, none of them have diminished from the importance of it in any way. It would be as foolish to say that a man is saved by baptism alone as to say that a man is saved by faith alone. But just because the Hebrew writer says, “without faith it is impossible to please him” (11:6), does not mean that baptism is not necessary to the fulfilling of God’s conditions for salvation.

“Well, what about those passages which use faith in regard to salvation and mention nothing about baptism?” someone asks. Most of the time the answer is synecdoche, a term which describes a context where a rather inclusive term is used for a less inclusive one. For instance, we sometimes speak of “the law” when we point to a policeman. In fact, that’s exactly the case in John 3:16: “For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten son that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” Here “believeth” is put for the entirety of the conditions for

salvation. In passing, please note that neither repentance nor right living are mentioned in the context either. But the very idea that one who believes would contradict his confession by not being baptized when the One in whom he believes commands it, is foolish indeed.

The same Bible that teaches baptism as essential to salvation shows the mode by which the action is administered. Baptism is a burial. Listen to Romans 6:3-4: “Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Christ were baptized into this death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we should walk in newness of life.” The passage clearly rules out sprinkling or pouring as the acceptable mode of baptism.

It should be clear from these same Scriptures that baptism is for believers—those who have clearly understood that they are in need of redemption—not babies who have no way to so do. “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved,” settles the matter. Really smart babies might believe something, but they do not believe that Jesus Christ is the answer to their sinfulness (Cf. Acts 8:37).

If we want to know about salvation, it behooves us to get back to the Bible and let it speak; and let it say all it has to say about salvation. It is the means by which God has instructed us regarding salvation; and it is foolish to add or diminish from it in any way.

Dee Bowman