

# Baffled About Baptism

## NT written in common language

1. Acts 2<sup>44</sup> Now all who believed were together, and had all things in common . . .
2. Some passages are difficult: 2 Pt.3<sup>16</sup> as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to under-  
stand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures

Hebrews 5<sup>12</sup> For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you again the first principles [elements of the beginning] of the oracles of God; and you have come to need milk and not solid food. <sup>13</sup> For everyone who partakes only of milk is unskilled in the word of righteousness, for he is a babe. <sup>14</sup> But solid food belongs to those who are of full age, that is, those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil

Hebrews 6<sup>1</sup> Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles [word of the beginning] of Christ, let us go on to perfection . . .

## Hb.6:1, elementary principles (NKJV)

- Basic teaching (NRSV)
- Elementary doctrine (ESV)
- Elementary teaching (NASB)
- Hb.6:1, grow! (Leave elementary principles)

Accountable people have no excuse for ignorance; some prefer 'another way'

# I. Heeding The Scriptures, Ac.8

## Ac.8:26-27

26: Angel sent preacher (Philip) . . . [not direct operation of an angel]

27: 'a man' from Ethiopia, had worshipped in Jerusalem [already religious; not saved. Cf. Ac.2]

26: **Gaza** (city), Hebrew (**strong, fortified**)

27: **Gaza**, Persian word (**treasure**)

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28: 'reading Isaiah' [aloud, **30**]



## Ac.8:27-28, hungry for more...

- The man was . . .
  - Religious
  - Zealous
  - Sincere
  - Respected
  - Trusted
  - Proselyte (?)
  - Ignorant of gospel
  - Lost

1. If universalism is true, why bother?
2. Religious people in Ac.2, 3, 9, 10, but lost
3. **Zealous people**  
(Ac.2 = Ac.8)

29: Spirit connects preacher with sinner

30: Philip's questions show him where to begin

31: Guide me... (admits need for help)

- Wrong guide → wrong destination

Ro.2<sup>19</sup> confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, <sup>20</sup> an instructor of the foolish, a teacher of babes, having the form of knowledge and truth in the law. <sup>21</sup> You, therefore, who teach another, do you not teach yourself

- Philip: God's guide

# Understanding is Essential

**32-34:** As most Jews, eunuch does not understand Jesus ... especially His sacrificial death

**35:** Philip explains “Jesus” with O.T.

- Jesus fulfills Isaiah 53 – (Ac.8:32-33) – a concept lost to Jews in their own Scriptures

## Philip (Acts 8)

1. Explains text – **what?**
2. Applies text to reader – **so what?**
3. Training – **who else?**

## 36: water baptism? ?

- “I thought Philip was preaching JESUS” (35)
- Preaching Jesus includes His gospel
  - Philip’s response = Ac.2:40 (same as preaching of Acts 2)
  - Eunuch’s response = Ac.2:41 (those who received the word...)

## 37-39: when does the eunuch rejoice? ?

### Four facts –

1. Lord's preachers taught same thing everywhere. Cf. 1 Co.4:17
2. Preaching Jesus includes preaching baptism. Contrast denominations.
3. Baptism requires going to, getting into water to immerse...
4. Plan is simple: eunuch understood it the first time he heard. Cf. –

\*Jerusalem, Ac.2:37-41 . . .

\*Samaria, Ac.8:5-13. Certainty is wonderful

40: Philip left the eunuch to find others

Resembles another time when a Stranger . . .

<sup>1</sup> joined two travelers

<sup>2</sup> explained Scriptures to them

<sup>3</sup> took part in a meal

<sup>4</sup> then disappeared

Luke 24:  
13-35

I. Heeding The Scriptures, Ac.8

II. Hindrances To Salvation, Ac.8<sup>36</sup>

# 1. Doubters deceive and are deceived about baptism

## 1. Salvation by water

- 2 K.5, Naaman: does anyone believe water cured leprosy?
- Jn.9:1-7, blind man ... water?
- 1 Pt.3:20-21, not mere water but proper use of water is NT condition for salvation



1. Doubters deceive and  
are deceived about baptism

2. 'Salvation by works'

- 2 K.5, Naaman glorified God, not his own work
- Jn.9:1-7, blind man gave glory to Christ, not himself

1. Doubters deceive and are deceived about baptism

3. ‘Salvation by faith’

- 2 K.5, required faith (obedience)
- Jn.9:1-7, required faith (obedience)
- Faith includes baptism. Gal.3<sup>26</sup> For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. <sup>27</sup> For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

# 1. Doubters deceive and are deceived about baptism

## 4. 'Salvation by grace'

- What if:
  - 'Naaman saved by grace; dipping not necessary'? ?
  - 'Blind man cured by grace; washing not necessary?' ?
- Or: 'saved by grace, not faith'? ?
  - False choices offer: *either - or*
  - NT teaching requires: *both - and*

## 2. Deniers of consequences of baptism

Rom.6:3-4

- In baptism, one enters into Christ...rises to walk in newness of life
- New life requires some things, forbids others. This hinders some who don't want to change their –
  - Minds: “I always believed this way...” – Cf. Jew, Acts 2
  - Ways: “I'm set in my ways...”  
Repentance is the hurdle.

### 3. Delayers of baptism

Acts 24:24-25

- “Tomorrow” – the great thief of souls
- Felix –
  1. Desire to hear
  2. Willing to listen
  3. Know the truth
  4. Agree with gospel
  5. Fear for soul
  6. Plan to obey

Tomorrow –  
too little, too late

## 4. Dodgers ignore passages on baptism

Mk.16:15-16, *he ... shall be saved.* He who?

- All ... (universalism?)
- Believer ... w/o baptism? Faith alone? (Ja.2)
- Baptized w/o belief? (Catholicism – infants)
- Baptized believers?

#### 4. Dodgers ignore passages on baptism

*Ac.2:37-38, repent ... be baptized...*

- Joins two conditions: <sup>1</sup>repent + <sup>2</sup>be baptized
- Whatever repentance is for, baptism is for

## 4. Dodgers ignore passages on baptism

Ac.22:16, *Saul*

- Not saved on road
- Not saved by prayers
- Not saved by fasting
  - When?
    - Belief and repentance did not wash his sins away without baptism
    - 10: would be told what to do. 16: what?



## 4. Dodgers ignore passages on baptism

1 Pt.3:21, *baptism and salvation*

- Parallels Mk.16:16 without reference to 'faith'
  - 20: **type**: destroyed evil world; eight saved in new world
  - 21: **antitype**: baptism corresponds to this
    - Destroys old man, saves us
    - Who saves ... "by resurrection of Jesus Christ"? – When?

“I was baptized. If that’s what it takes, I’m in!”

People are always baptized *in* something *for* something. Does purpose matter?

- Mt.6:1, Pharisees: good practice cancelled by wrong purpose
- 1 Co.11:20, ate right elements ... but did not partake of Lord’s Supper
- Ac.19:1-7, right subjects / element / action / wrong purpose
  - “Why” matters. You have one soul...
  - 2 Pt.1:10