

No Baptism—No Blood

Dub McClish

With few exceptions, religious bodies professing belief in Jesus as the Christ, the only begotten of the Father, treat baptism as inconsequential. Some ignore it as if it were not in the New Testament, while others consider it “important,” but not essential to please God, with various views in between.

That baptism in water is a significant subject in the New Testament is undeniable. John and Jesus practiced it in preparation for the kingdom (Mat. 3:2–6; John 4:1–2). Jesus included it as part of His Gospel that is to be preached in all the world (Mat. 28:19–20; Mark 16: 15–16). On Pentecost, when Peter first preached the Gospel in its fullness, he commanded sinners to be baptized, and about 3,000 did so (Acts 2:38, 41).

In every detailed case of conversion in Acts, baptism is the consummating act. Further, the New Testament epistles emphasize the subject of baptism. Why do inspired writers thus stress the teaching and administration of baptism if it is an optional act for sinners? The fact is that it is an obligatory, rather than an optional act for all who would receive forgiveness of their sins and become Christians. If baptism is a necessary act, why is it so? This question leads us to the subject of blood atonement.

The principle of blood atonement for sin is clearly enunciated in numerous passages, but none clearer than the following: “...apart from shedding of blood there is no remission” (Heb. 9:22b). This principle is first seen in Abel’s sacrifice in the shadow of Eden and continues in the numerous altars of Noah, Job, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his descendants in Egypt. The law of Moses was so blood-related that “According to the law, I may almost say, all things are cleansed with blood” (Heb. 9: 22a). But all of that blood was of “bulls and goats,” which could not take away sin (10:4).

The Old Testament offerings were but types of the only blood that cleanses. The efficacy of the Christian system to save men rests on the sacrifice of the perfect Lamb of God through Whose blood men can be cleansed of sin (John 1:29).

This fact brings us back to baptism, for it is the act in which the blood of Christ cleanses the sinner. In baptism, sins are “washed away” (Acts 22:16), but not in the water, for only Jesus’ blood can cleanse (1 Pet. 1:18–19; Rev. 1:5). Baptism in water is the act ordained by the Lord in which sinners partake of the atoning benefits of His death in which He shed His blood (Rom. 6:3–4; 1 John 2:2). Since baptism is the point of contacting His blood, and apart from His blood there is no forgiveness, it follows: **No baptism-no blood; no blood-no forgiveness; thus, no baptism-no forgiveness.**

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