**December 2013**

**Believers Baptism…What is it?**

**I was raised in a church of a major denomination that taught believers baptism meant getting immersed in water, not for salvation, but for following our Lord in the”  first act of obedience” and getting your name on the church roll.  Along with this came the eligibility to partake of the Lord’s Supper, which in our church, was unleavened bread and wine. One Sunday morning, when I was about 10 years old, I went forward and presented myself as a candidate for baptism and church membership.   I got voted in and everybody came around and congratulated me and shook my hand.  A couple weeks later, I was baptized in a large tank of water.  Now everything was in order.  I had achieved “Believer’s baptism” or had I actually participated in an unscriptural ceremonial ordinance carried over from a former dispensation.   I had to know the answer, so in 2010 I began to prayerfully search the scriptures.**

**Using  2 Timothy 2:15, I was convinced that in order to understand the Word of God, one must rightly divide the Word of Truth and that can only be done by using the dispensational method of Bible study.   I soon discovered that there are several different types of baptisms mentioned in the Bible.  I also discovered that the Greek word for baptism means to identify with something or someone.  People were baptized with water, fire, a cloud, the Holy Spirit and more.**

**What I did not discover was any place in the Bible, where in this Church age, we are commanded to water baptize anyone.  In fact, our own apostle (Paul) said in 1 Corinthians 1:14-17 “I Thank God, that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius.”  Paul was thankful that he did not baptize any others.  Paul goes on to say, “For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel.” It should be obvious to any sincere student of the Bible, that Paul was not under the same commission given to the eleven apostles in Matt.28:19.  One big question that goes through my mind is: if Paul was not sent to baptize, then who “sent” the denominational pastors of this age to baptize?**

**Another verse that was conflicting with me was Ephesians 4:5 “one Lord, one faith, one baptism."  Most believers accept that when an individual is saved he/she is identified with, placed into, baptized by the Holy Spirit into the body of Christ (Sounds like believers’ baptism to me).  Now, if we tell that person that they still needed to be baptized, either to complete salvation or to be obedient, then we have 2 baptisms instead of one.  This should be a real problem to those who still insist on dunking people in water.    It sure looks like this should have been left with the rest of the Kingdom Gospel.**

**I have just one more thing regarding this water baptism.  We were taught that we were identifying with the death burial and resurrection of Jesus when we submit to this ordinance.  A close look at what Jesus said at His baptizing is very revealing: “and Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now: for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness” (Matt.3:15).  Jesus fulfilled all of the law.  His baptism was not needed for any sin He committed but He “became sin for us.”  So another big question:   Since Jesus went through all of this for us, do you really think He appreciates anyone trying to add something to what He has finished?**

**In conclusion, nowhere in any of the Pauline epistles will you find Paul instructing anyone to water baptize anybody.  The one and only believer baptism is done by the Holy Spirit when He places (baptizes) us into the Body of Christ.  That takes  place instantaneously when one believes that Jesus died on the cross for their sins, was buried for three days, and arose on the third day( 1 Corinthians 15:1-4)**

**There are several wonderful books, booklets and articles available at the Berean Bible Society website on water baptism and many other subjects.   If anything in my short note has sparked an interest, please visit their site for material on this subject.**

**Yours in Christ,**

**Phil**