



BELIEVERS WANT TO BE BAPTIZED

J. A. McNutt

If you believe in Jesus Christ as God's Son, and have repented of all your past sins, you will want to be baptized. You know that Jesus loves you. You love Him and want to obey His will (John 14:15). You remember the final words that Jesus spoke before going back to Heaven: **"Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned"** (Mark 16:15,16).

You trust the Lord's promise of salvation to all who believe and are baptized, but you need someone to assist you in being baptized. You understand that you should be baptized into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit (Matthew 28:18-20). You also know that no instruction is given in God's Word concerning the character or qualifications of the one who does the baptizing. The preacher who taught you the truth could baptize you. Or some other Christian might do it. If a Christian is not available, anyone could do it as long as he immerses you in water according to the teaching of the Bible. No where in the Bible is it taught that only an "ordained minister" can baptize! Judas Iscariot, who betrayed the Lord, baptized others (John 4:1,2). Was their baptism worthless because Judas was a wicked man? If one has heard the Gospel, believed in Jesus Christ as God's Son, repented of all his past sins and confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, he is qualified to be baptized (Romans 10: 17; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Romans 10:10). No qualifications are given for the one who does the baptizing!

If our acceptance with God depended upon the character of the one who baptizes us, we would have to be able to trace an unbroken chain of such men back to Acts, chapter 2, when the Lord's church was first established. God accepts and saves every person who obeys the qualifications He has given for salvation regardless of the one who does the baptizing. If this were not the case, we could never be sure our baptism was acceptable for the one who baptized us might be an unworthy person and we did not know it.

The Lord would not require you to be baptized, but leave you without someone who could do it. If baptism had to be done by some preacher, pastor, priest or other church official," our Lord would have told us. The important thing to consider is the heart of the person who is baptized. Do you understand the purpose of baptism? Do you truly believe that Jesus Christ is God's Son? Has godly sorrow led you to repent of all past sins? Of course, you would prefer to be baptized by the one who taught you the truth of the Gospel, or by some faithful Christian, but if such is not available, then anyone can baptize you.

You may have been taught the Gospel by reading a tract or taking a Bible correspondence course. In this way, you have learned what you must do in order to be saved. Don't wait until a Gospel preacher is able to come to you. Ask one of your friends to assist you in being baptized. Since your friend may not understand what Bible baptism is, you should explain to him that baptism requires a burial in water and a raising up out of the water (Acts 8:36-39; Romans 6:1-4). Your friend should place you in the water so that your entire body is completely covered. Then he should quickly raise you up out of the water.

Baptism should always be done quietly and with great respect. You should remember that in baptism, you are remembering the burial and resurrection of Jesus. Before you are baptized, you should confess with your mouth, "**I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God**"(Matthew 10:32; Acts 8:37; Romans 10:8-10). A baptism can best be done when the one to be baptized is standing in water waist deep. If this much water is not available, you can sit down in shallow water. Then the baptizer will gently lower you backward until your entire body is covered. Then the baptizer will quickly raise you up out of the water. The Bible does not tell us that we must say any "special" words when we baptize someone. However, for the instruction of those who may be watching, it would be good for the baptizer to state what he is doing. He could simply say, "For the forgiveness of your sins, I now baptize you into the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit."

One is not saved until he has been baptized. If you have heard and believed the Gospel, then you need to be baptized without delay. In the examples in the New Testament of people becoming Christians, we will find that they were baptized the same day and the very same hour that they believed (Acts 2:41; 8:35-39; 16:33). Do not delay! Be baptized this very day for your eternal salvation depends upon your obedience to the Gospel of Christ!