IDENTITY CRISIS Pastor Rick Baker

#11 What does the church do? April 11 2021

**Baptizes Believers**

(Matt. 28:19,20; Mk. 1:4-11; Acts 2:42,47; 22:16; Rom. 6:3-14; Col. 2:11-12)

“All **authority** in heaven and earth has been given to me. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, **baptizing** them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to **obey everything** I have commanded you.” (Matt. 28:18-20)

**Intro**—Denominations, Adoniram/Ann Judson (pictures),

***What does the Bible have to say about…?***

***Baptism***

“THE initiatory rite into the Christian Church” (Schreiner/Wright) and the most visible representation of the relationship a believer has with Christ and his church. Of all other rites and rituals of the church, it is the Christian practice that “has most resulted in persecution and martyrdom” (George) and is fast becoming the most endangered of all Christ’s commands among those who award it only a secondary place in the drama of salvation.

An “outward sign” appointed in Scripture by which we make faith visible and “supreme occasion” for confessing faith in the gospel. (Beasley-Murray) *Those already baptized by the Spirit (Mk. 1:8)*

*It may be more than that, but it is not less—we must do no less than the least in making our faith visible.*

*What about the* ***meaning*** *and* ***mode*** *of baptism?*

*The meaning--The rite of commitment*

* *An act of* ***IDENTIFICATION*** *with Christ (Rom. 6:3-5)*

*An act of radical obedience, a renunciation, and a specific promise*

* *An act of* ***PURIFICATION*** *symbolizing not only the forgiveness of sins, but the empowerment to be freed from sin (Rom. 6:6-14) A decisive transition from an old way of life to a new way of life (turning in the opposite direction)—a solemn profession of a redeemed sinner and appeal to God of a clear conscience (1 Pet. 3:21)*
* *An act of* ***INCORPORATION*** *into his one body (1 Cor. 12:13; Gal 3:26-28)*

*A serious and sacred act of incorporation into the visible community of faith*

*When is the right time and the right way (mode)?*

*The stain of Augustinian error (400 AD), the Reformer’s circle of perpetual salvation, and the strain on a united practice of baptism.*

*“Were child(infant) baptism now wrong, God would certainly not have permitted it to continue so long, nor let it become so universally and thoroughly established in all Christendom.” (Luther, 1528)*

*“The children of believers are baptized not in order that they who were previously strangers to the church may then for the first time become children of God, but rather that, because by the blessing of the promise they already belonged to the body of Christ, they are received into the church with this solemn sign.” (Calvin, I.C.R., 1536)*

*When a person can understand salvation enough to receive Christ by faith, can explain it to an Elder, can testify to the church, and can understand the meaning of obey, the urgency of obedience should be the most important factor in determining the timing of baptism. (Rom. 10:9-13)*

* *The* ***meaning*** *of baptidzo*

*“to dip”*

* *The* ***descriptions*** *in the NT*

*“Jesus came up from the water” In the river, lots of water (Mk. 1:10; Jn 3:22; 8:36)*

*Archeological site evidence (Ephesus, Laodicea)*

* *Which mode* ***illustrates****/symbolizes the theology most? (Rom. 6:4)*

*Paul was obviously picturing immersion to symbolize the believer’s identification with Christ in his burial as a gospel illustration of dying to the old life and being raised to a new life—only immersion pictures that.*

*(What about “irregular baptism”? Your first baptism was sincere but lacked the fuller expression you have learned from the Scriptures—I am being baptized again to express my desire to be responsive to my present Scriptural convictions.)*

*The* ***importance*** *of baptism?*

* *It is a* ***command*** *of Christ. “…one of the activities that characterize disciple-making.” (Carson, “Matthew”)*

*Essential to Christian discipleship—you simply aren’t making disciples if you aren’t first baptizing people.*

* *It is commanded by Peter in his* ***church formation sermon*** *(Acts 2:38)*

*“Repent each of you and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ…”*

*Jn the B preached repentance and forgiveness—baptism of the cross🡪 baptism of the Holy Spirit (Mark 1:4-11)*

* *Christians are* ***characterized*** *by “one baptism.” (Eph. 4:5)*

*Baptism by the Spirit into the body of Christ symbolized in water baptism.*

* ***Unbaptized*** *Christians are unknown in the NT.*
* ***Faith*** *and baptism repeatedly connected in Acts (8:12-13; 10:43-48; 18:8; 19:4-5); as is baptism and the* ***Holy Spirit*** *(Acts 2:38; 8:12-17; 10:44-48)*

 *GO MAKE DISCIPLES, BAPTIZING THEM…!*

*The church of Jesus Christ consists of people who by faith have confessed Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour and have publicly affirmed that confession by obeying the command of Jesus to be baptized.*

Have you received the grace of salvation through the forgiveness of your sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit?

Have you obeyed Christ’s command to be baptized?