

BAPTIST ALTERNATIVES TO CONTEMPORARY ECCLESIOLOGY

2005 Paschal Bible Lectures, October 4 & 6

BMA Seminary -- Jacksonville, Texas

Philip R. Bryan, Ph.D.

Thursday Morning

BAPTISM AND THE BODY OF CHRIST

Baptism Is A Sign, Not A Sacrament

Introduction. -- At the heart of ecclesiology is the worship of the church and the divinely ordained ordinances which pertain to the proclamation and remembrance of the Gospel. In Christendom there has been much controversy over the subject of baptism. Baptism -- and our beliefs on the proper administration of it -- is where we get our name, Baptists.

I. Negative Considerations

1. Baptism is not a Sacrament, with saving efficacy.
2. Based on false reasoning, depending on 2 Greek prepositions: *en*, *eis* – ἐν, εἰς.
 - a. *en X* (in Christ) equals salvation (2 Cor 5:17).
 - b. Baptism **into Christ** (*eis X*) produces **in X** (*en X*).
 - c. Therefore, baptism produces salvation (RC and CC?).
3. BUT THIS IS CONTRARY TO NT TEACHING ON JUSTIFICATION, etc.
4. Evangelical Protestantism teaches a spirit baptism -- spirit baptizes us into X -- it is not a baptism in water at all and/or water baptism is a picture of spirit baptism (i.e., "pouring out of the spirit").
5. BUT THIS IS A WRONG WAY TO INTERPRET THESE PREPOSITIONS.

II. Positive Considerations .

1. Baptism is a sign (completely).
2. *En* is used to show element in which one is immersed; *eis* is used to indicate something else.
3. OT usage of *en* in baptismal passages.
 - a. LXX has *en* in only example of baptize with prep. in OT 2 Kgs 5:14.
 - b. MT *tabhal* always uses the same prep: *be* – בְּ. *Baptizo* with *en*, *bapto* with *eis* and *en*.
4. NT usage of *en* in baptismal passages.
 - a. Mk 1, Matt 3, Lk 3.
 - b. What about Mk 1:9, etc.? Cf. Mat. 3:5, 13 and Lk. 4:4 -- The region of the Jordan.
 - c. 1 Cor 10, 1 Cor 12, Gal 3, Rom 13, Rom 6. All of these verses have the same idiom.
5. OT usage of *le / eis* – לְ / εἰς – in symbolic acts.
 - a. 1 Kgs 19
 - b. Ez. 37

Conclusion.– *le / eis* – לְ / εἰς each used as a "pointer" to indicate the relationship between an

act and what is symbolized (cf. BDB). Baptism is a sign referring to something else -- it is not sacramental or magical.

Baptism Is Confession and Profession

Introduction -- As a sign, baptism points to something else. It is a confession and profession of faith in Christ.

I. Baptism Is A Confession

1. A sign (symbol) of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus (not a pouring out of the spirit) -- DBR are in Rom 6 and Col 2.
2. OT examples of dramatic portrayals--
 - a. Jeremiah, Ezekiel, and Isaiah.
 - b. John the Baptist and Elijah.
 - c. Sabbath observance.
 - d. Circumcision, scape-goat.
3. Baptism, therefore, is a dramatic portrayal of the DBR of Jesus.
4. A dramatic testimony of belief in these events.
5. Confession is defined as "a formal statement of religious beliefs."
6. Baptism is a dramatic statement of one's belief that Christ died, was buried, and rose again.

II. Baptism Is A Profession

1. It identifies w/X -- we play out the role -- like Sabbath observance and scapegoat.
2. A common act produces unity -- cf. Gal 3 -- "putting on X" equals "one" as in Sabbath observance and circumcision.
3. A profession of death and burial (Rom 6).
4. A profession of death, resurrection, and life (Rom 6), cf. Gal 2:20.
5. Profession is defined as "an act of taking vows [i.e., promises] of a religious community.
6. Therefore, baptism is a dramatic profession of a new life to be lived with Christ.
7. In 1 Cor 12:13, the same spirit leads people to make the same testimony in baptism; they also have the same spirit living in them. Therefore, they can have unity.

Conclusion. -- (1) A Christian's life is to be different from the world (see Rom 6:1-2). (2) The initiatory Christian rite of baptism testifies to this; it signifies death and resurrection of self. (3) A wonderful sign of confession and profession.

1. Ro 6 – Roma 6:3 (GNT) ἢ ἀγνοεῖτε ὅτι, ὅσοι **ἐβαπτίσθημεν εἰς Χριστὸν** Ἰησοῦν, **εἰς τὸν θάνατον αὐτοῦ ἐβαπτίσθημεν**; Roma 6:3 (KJS) Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? {were: or, are}
2. Gal 3 – Gala 3:26 (GNT) Πάντες γὰρ υἱοὶ θεοῦ ἐστε διὰ τῆς πίστεως ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ· 27 ὅσοι γὰρ **εἰς Χριστὸν ἐβαπτίσθητε**, Χριστὸν ἐνεδύσασθε. 28 οὐκ ἔστι Ἰουδαῖος οὐδὲ Ἕλληνας, οὐκ ἔστι δοῦλος οὐδὲ ἐλεύθερος, οὐκ ἔστι ἄρσεν καὶ θῆλυ· πάντες γὰρ ὑμεῖς εἷς ἐστε ἐν Χριστῷ Ἰησοῦ. Gala 3:26 (KJS) For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond

nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

3. 1 Cor 12 – 1Cor 12:12 (GNT) Καθάπερ γὰρ τὸ σῶμα ἓν ἐστὶν καὶ μέλη πολλὰ ἔχει, πάντα δὲ τὰ μέλη τοῦ σώματος πολλὰ ὄντα ἓν ἐστὶν σῶμα, οὕτως καὶ ὁ Χριστός· 13 καὶ γὰρ ἐν ἐνὶ πνεύματι ἡμεῖς πάντες εἰς ἓν σῶμα ἐβαπτίσθημεν, εἴτε Ἰουδαῖοι εἴτε Ἕλληνες εἴτε δοῦλοι εἴτε ἐλεύθεροι, καὶ πάντες ἓν πνεῦμα ἐποτίσθημεν. 1Cor 12:12 (KJS) For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also [is] Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether [we be] Jews or Gentiles, whether [we be] bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. {Gentiles: Gr. Greeks }