

The Conscience of Baptism

“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but **the answer of a good conscience toward God,**) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ.”

I Peter 3:21

Introduction:

1. We have been studying the attributes of God, and baptism is His ordained way we can answer Him. Glory!
2. We studied this morning the glorious attribute of God’s holiness, which should cause us to love baptism, for it symbolically shows the means by which the holy God of heaven made the way open to Him by Jesus Christ.
3. Baptism declares how we were made holy, that even our bodies will be holy, and that we commit to be holy!

What is your conscience?

- A. Your conscience is the part of the human spirit that either accuses or excuses you (Rom 2:13-15).
- B. It is called the candle of the Lord, for it searches the internal aspects of your soul (Proverbs 20:27).
- C. When Jesus confronted scribes and Pharisees, their consciences condemned them (John 8:1-11).

Does baptism involve the conscience?

- A. Yes, the Bible teaches that baptism is the answer of a good conscience toward God (I Peter 3:21).
- B. Yes, the Bible teaches a conscience must believe with all its heart on Jesus for baptism (Acts 8:37).
- C. Yes, the Bible teaches baptism requires repentance, which involves the conscience (Acts 2:37-38).

How does baptism involve the conscience?

- A. A person hears the gospel, his conscience is convicted, and he believes on Jesus Christ for salvation.
- B. Bible baptism requires repentance, which requires a convicted conscience (Acts 2:38; 13:24; 19:4).
- C. Those baptized in the N.T. were believers, involving the conscience (Matt 3:8; 21:32; 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 8:12; 16:14-15,31-34; 18:8; 19:4; 22:16; Gal 3:26-27; Eph 4:5; Col 2:12; Heb 6:1-2).

Does a baby have a conscience?

- A. No, a child does not have any active conscience at birth, for it does not even know it dirties itself.
- B. No, a child does not know nakedness until near five, contrary to adults (Gen 2:25; 3:7; Lev 27:5-6).
- C. God judged those under 20 unable to know right and wrong (Num 14:28-32; Deut 1:39; Jonah 4:11).

Why do most so-called Christians baptize babies?

- A. Because they made the heretical assumption that baptism saves along with holding to the doctrine of original sin, thus needing to save infants by baptism before they might die in infancy or childhood.
- B. After they assume one lie, they make baptism the condition for the covenant of grace for salvation.
- C. After these two false assumptions, they assume every household baptism had a nursery of infants!
- D. After these three false assumptions, they involve both godparents and confirmation for their heresy.

How do baby sprinklers ignore the conscience?

- A. With such a mother-pleasing doctrine to offer, they do not care what the Bible says about baptism.
- B. They reject Acts 8:37 and delete it from their Bibles e.g. NIV, TNIV, ESV, NLT, RSV, NRSV, etc.
- C. They corrupt I Peter 3:21 so that baptism is the request for a good conscience, not the answer of one!

What is a bad conscience?

- A. A bad conscience is one that feels the condemning guilt for sins that leaves one hopeless and fearful.
- B. The purpose of God’s Law is to shut every mouth and leave them guilty before God (Romans 3:19).

- C. Isaiah's cry of anguish in the holy presence of Jehovah illustrates a bad conscience for us (Is 6:1-5).
- D. See John's audience of the people, publicans, and soldiers convicted of their sins (Luke 3:10-14).
- E. See Peter's audience of the Jews in Jerusalem at Pentecost convicted of their sins (Acts 2:37-38).

Could the Law help a bad conscience?

- A. No, O.T. ordinances and sacrifices remembered sins; they did not remove them (Heb 9:9; 10:1-4).
- B. No, for God had to replace the O.T. ordinances and sacrifices with the Lamb of God (Heb 10:5-14).
- C. Jewish fables and commandments defiled the consciences of men by rejecting Christ (Titus 1:14-16).

What is a good conscience?

- A. A good conscience is one that believes the good news of the gospel that Jesus paid for all its sins.
- B. Isaiah's confidence after the angel purged his sins to volunteer for service illustrates it (Isaiah 6:6-8).
- C. Consider those at Pentecost (Acts 2:37-41)! And the eunuch's and jailor's joy (Acts 8:39; 16:34)!

How do we get a good conscience?

- A. We preach the full gospel of Jesus Christ honestly and plainly in the fear of the Lord (II Cor 4:1-5).
- B. The gospel is the good news that Christ's blood opened the way to God's holy presence (Heb 9:14).
- C. We believe the gospel and act upon it, including baptism, to boldly approach God (Heb 10:19-22)!

What does a good conscience do?

- A. A good conscience will honor and obey God, even if humbling and painful for a man (I Pet 2:18-20).
- B. A good conscience will answer God for what He did in sending Jesus Christ for him (I Peter 3:21).
- C. A good conscience, as in the example of Isaiah, responds with willing service to God (Isaiah 6:8).
- D. Note it was the eunuch that asked to be baptized, and neither the jailor nor Cornelius hesitated at all!

How does a good conscience live?

- A. A good conscience will not live any longer as a servant of sin, but of righteousness (Romans 6:1-23).
- B. A good conscience will live a resurrected life with eyes to heaven in all parts of life (Col 3:1-25).
- C. A good conscience reasons that Christ's death should motivate living for Christ (II Cor 5:14-15).
- D. A good conscience sees that God's mercies make sacrificial living reasonable service (Rom 12:1-2).

Conclusion:

1. Baptism may be seen as a swearing-in ceremony for military service – to Jesus the Captain of our salvation!
2. Let us never forget Antipedo Baptist Christians that suffered for and declared the gospel truth about baptism!

For Further Study:

1. Baptism Babel and I Peter 3:21 ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/baptism-babel.pdf>.
2. Full study materials of baptism ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/bible/baptism/baptism.php>.
3. Strange or heretical baptisms ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/strange-baptisms.pdf>.
4. The Age of Accountability ... <http://www.letgodbetruer.com/pdf/strange-baptisms.pdf>.