

Rebaptism

When the Former Baptism Does Not Satisfy.

There are many at the present day who have unwittingly violated one of the precepts of God's law. When the understanding is enlightened, and the claims of the fourth commandment are urged upon the conscience, they see themselves sinners in the sight of God. "Sin is the transgression of the law" and "he that shall offend on one point is guilty of all."

The honest seeker after truth will not plead ignorance of the law as an excuse for transgression. Light was within his reach. God's Word is plain, and Christ has bidden him search the Scriptures. He reveres God's law as holy, just, and good, and he repents of his transgression. By faith he pleads the atoning blood of Christ, and grasps the promise of pardon. His former baptism does not satisfy him now. He has seen himself a sinner, condemned by the law of God. He has experienced anew a death to sin, and he desires again to be buried with Christ by baptism, that he may rise to walk in newness of life. Such a course is in harmony with the example of Paul in baptizing the Jewish converts. That incident was recorded by the Holy Spirit as an instructive lesson for the church.--Sketches From the Life of Paul, p. 133. (1883) Ev 372.

Not to Be Made a Testing Question for New Believers.

The subject of rebaptism should be handled with the greatest care. After the truth is presented upon the Sabbath question and other important points of our faith, and souls manifest the moral courage to take their position upon the truth, they will see this question in the Bible light if they are fully converted. But by some these questions have been handled unwisely, and God has sent reproof many times on this point. Those who place the subject of rebaptism in the front, making it of as much importance as the Sabbath question, are not leaving the right impression upon the minds and correctly representing the subject. It requires great discrimination to bring in kindred truths with the Sabbath, rightly dividing the Word, giving to each his portion of meat in due season.

Those who lift the cross of the Sabbath have a tremendous battle to fight with self and with selfish interests which would interpose between their souls and God. Then when they have taken this great step and their feet have been planted upon the platform of eternal truth, they must have time to become accustomed to their new position, and not be hurried on the question of rebaptism. No one should become a conscience for another or urge and press rebaptism.

This is a subject which each individual must conscientiously take his position upon in the fear of God. This subject should be carefully presented in the spirit of tenderness and love. Then the duty of urging belongs to no one but God; give God a chance to work with His Holy Spirit upon the minds, so that the individual will be perfectly convinced and satisfied in regard to this advanced step. A spirit of controversy and contention should never be allowed to come in and prevail on this subject. Do not take the Lord's work out of His hands into your own hands. Those who have conscientiously taken their position upon the commandments of God, will, if rightly dealt with, accept all essential truth. But it needs wisdom to deal with human minds. Some will be longer in seeing and understanding some kindred truths than others, especially will this be the case in regard to the subject of rebaptism, but there is a divine hand that is leading them--a divine spirit impressing their hearts, and they will know what they ought to do and do it.

Let none of our zealous brethren overdo this matter. They will be in danger of getting before the Lord and making tests for others which the Lord has not bidden them to make. It is not the work of any of our teachers to urge rebaptism upon anyone. It is their business to lay down the great principles of Bible truths, especially is this the case in regard to rebaptism. Then let God do the work of convicting the mind and heart. . . .

Every honest soul who accepts the Sabbath of the fourth commandment will see and understand his duty in time. But it will take time for some. It is not a subject to be driven and forced upon those newly

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come to the truth, but this subject will work like leaven; the process will be slow and quiet, but it will do its work, if our ministering brethren will not be too fast and defeat the purpose of God. {Ev 374.2}

Those who have long looked upon this subject see it quite clearly and think all others should see it just as they do. They do not consider that with some newly come to the faith this matter looks like denying all their former religious experience. But in time they will come to regard the matter differently. As the truth is constantly unfolding to their minds, they will see advanced steps to be taken; new light will flash upon their pathway; God's Spirit will work upon their minds, if men will not interfere and seek to drive them to the positions which they think are truth.

Now let it be distinctly understood, from time to time all through our experience, God has given me testimonies of caution to our brethren in regard to handling the subject of rebaptism. Our good Brother _____ and several others of our ministers I was shown were making a mistake at some point in their experience in putting in the front and making a test question of rebaptism. This is not the way that the subject should be treated. It is a matter to be treated as a great privilege and blessing, and all who are rebaptized, if they have the right ideas upon this subject, will thus consider it. These good brethren were not bringing those newly come to the faith along step by step, cautiously and guardedly, and the result was that some were turned from the truth, when a little time and tender, careful dealing with them would have prevented all such sad results.--Letter 56, 1886.

Reconversion and Rebaptism of Seventh-day Adventists.

The Lord calls for a decided reformation. And when a soul is truly reconverted, let him be rebaptized. Let him renew his covenant with God, and God will renew His covenant with him. . . . Reconversion must take place among the members, that as God's witnesses they may testify to the authoritative power of the truth that sanctifies the soul.-- Letter 63, 1903. Ev 372-375

When Rebaptism Is Appropriate

And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord. Acts 22:16.

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This is a subject which each individual must conscientiously take his position upon in the fear of God.... The duty of urging belongs to no one but God; give God a chance to work with His Holy Spirit upon the minds, so that the individual will be perfectly convinced and satisfied in regard to this advanced step....

It {rebaptism} is a matter to be treated as a great privilege and blessing, and all who are rebaptized, if they have the right ideas upon this subject, will thus consider it.

It is the privilege and the duty of every Christian to have a rich and abundant experience in the things of God. "I am the light of the world," said Jesus. "He that followeth me shall not walk in darkness, but shall have the light of life." John 8:12. . . . Every step of faith and obedience brings the soul into closer connection with the Light of the world, in whom there "is no darkness at all." FLB 148

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EGW was re-baptised into the Sabbath truth:

Soon after accepting the Sabbath truth, Ellen White requested rebaptism--undoubtedly into the third angel's message. James White writes of this in Life Incidents, page 273, in connection with his presentation of Ellen White's visions:

On receiving baptism at my hands, at an early period of her experience, as I raised her up out of the water, immediately she was in vision.

This is the only reference to this step in her experience; the date of the rebaptism is not known. {1BIO 121-122.}