

MARK 16:16

Tracy Dugger

Jesus stated to His apostles, "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). Surely this passage is among the clearest in all the Bible. It explicitly teaches that baptism is necessary for salvation. However, many attempt to dismiss the force of Jesus' words: "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." They teach, "He that believeth and is **not** baptized shall be saved." One can easily see that Jesus did not so teach.

One objection leveled against God's people when they teach from Mark 16:16 is that Jesus did not say, "He that believeth not **and is not baptized** shall be damned." When Curtis Porter met Glenn Tingley on this matter in public debate, Tingley responded to Porter's argument on Mark 16:16 by saying that it did *not* say, "He that believeth not and **is not** baptized shall be damned."

Brother Porter countered in the following manner: *No. I know it did not. If it had, it would have been silly. Suppose that some of you teachers who have a class in school, would give your class this statement tomorrow: "He that eats food and digests it shall have health." You require the class to bring the negative of that on the following day. The next day Johnnie comes back with this: "He that eats food and digests it shall have health; but he that eats not and does **not digest it** shall starve." I wonder what kind of grade little Johnnie would get on that?...Why that's silly - the very idea of digesting food that you haven't eaten.*

Let me tell you, my friends, the man who has not believed can no more be scripturally baptized than a man can digest food that he has not eaten. It takes both eating the food and digesting the food to bring health; but eating no food alone will bring starvation; and you do not have to say, "And does not digest it."

It takes both belief and baptism to bring the salvation; but unbelief alone will bring the damnation; and you do not have to say, "And is not baptized." It takes both belief and baptism to bring salvation, but belief alone will bring condemnation. (Porter-Tingley Debate; Dehoff Publications, Murfreesboro, TN; 1947, p. 269). Porter devastated the error of Mr. Tingley by using a simple parallel. 1519 Miller Street - Malvern, AR 72104

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Jim E. Waldron, Editor
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ORDAIN PREACHERS, DEDICATE BABIES?

Johnny Ramsey

(Where in the Bible does it teach about ordaining preachers and having services for dedicating babies? Are these things to be practiced today?)

There is no Bible authority for either practice. Christ told his servants, "Go ye and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I commanded you: and lo, I am with you always, even unto the end of the world...Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved? (Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16). In this commission, Jesus appointed, or ordained, believers to preach and teach His gospel until the end of time. That is all the authority we need to proclaim His truth with power (Titus 2:15). Human hands cannot intervene in that arrangement. No council or synod or hierarchy countermands heaven's decree.

Nowhere in the Scriptures do you find the practice of "dedicating babies" as a religious rite. Parents are told, "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord" (Ephesians 6:4). No religious ceremony is necessary or commanded to "train up a child in the way he should go" (Proverbs 22:6). We are told, "Whatsoever ye do, in word or in deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Colossians 3:17). How can we do something in the name of the Lord which He never authorized? Too many people desire display and ostentatious ceremony rather than personal responsibility. P.O. Box 235 - Rowlett, TX 75088

HOMOSEXUALITY

John M. Grubb

God, through Paul, makes it clear those who practice homosexuality will not go to heaven. “Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:9-11). The word for “homosexual” comes from the Greek phrase which means “men having sexual relations.”

Is the Word of God ambiguous about homosexuality? No! For it says, “You shall not lie with a male as with a woman. It is an abomination” (Lev. 18:22). Again it is written, “For this reason God gave them up to vile passions. For even their women exchanged the natural use for what is against nature. Likewise also the men, leaving the natural use of the woman, burned in their lust for one another, men with men committing what is shameful, and receiving in themselves the penalty of their error which was due” (Rom. 1:26-27).

Note the words Paul uses in this passage: “vile,” “against nature,” “shameful,” “error.” These are not words of approval. In the context, Paul is discussing the unrighteousness of the Gentiles (Rom. 1:18). Again it is written, “But we know that the law is good if one uses it lawfully, knowing this: that the law is not made for a righteous person, but for the lawless and insubordinate, for the ungodly and for sinners, for the unholy and profane, for murderers of fathers and murderers of mothers, for manslayers, for fornicators, for sodomites, for kidnappers, for liars, for perjurers, and if there is any other thing that is contrary to sound doctrine” (I Tim. 1:8-10). In verse 10, Paul mentions the “sodomites.” This is the same Greek word that is translated in I Corinthians 6:9 as “homosexual.” All of these passages show us the way God views this practice. It is condemned.

CAN THE HOMOSEXUAL BE SAVED?

God loves all people and wants all to be saved (John 3:16; I Tim. 2:4). The homosexual can be saved the same way any other sinner can be saved. They must repent and be baptized (Acts 17:30; Acts 22:16). Then the practice must be stopped (See Acts 26:20)! “Such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God” (I Cor. 6:11). 625 W. Orchard Lane, Greenwood, IN 46142

LEGISLATIVE AWARENESS

Jim E. Waldron

The United States Congress has very recently or will soon vote on many life or death issues for the American people and their children.

The following is a partial list of such issues with their House of Representative’s (HR) number if available:

- 1 Lethal drugs for suicide (HR - 4006) Infidels in this country are pushing to promote more suicide (euthanasia), especially among the elderly and infirmed. The Psalmist wrote, “Do not cast me off in the time of my old age; do not forsake me when my strength fails” (Psa. 71:9).
- 2 Partial birth abortion (HR - 1122) This the demonic practice which allows a doctor to partially deliver a baby, then stab the infant in the back of the head and use a vacuum to suck out the brain. The president has with two vetoes protected this ungodly practice.
- 3 Child Custody Protect Act (HR- 3682) This bill would make it a federal crime to transport a minor across a state line to obtain an abortion if the resident state required parental involvement.
- 4 Chemicals for abortion (HR - 4101).
- 5 Health plans to include abortion (HR - 4104).
- 6 Foreign aid to promote abortions (HR - 1757).

The Word of God plainly says, “The Lord hates...hands that shed innocent blood” (Pro. 6:16-17). Christians do not fight abortion with sticks, guns or bombs. For it is written, “For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh” (II Cor. 10:3). Those individuals who shoot at or bomb abortion clinics are enemies of the whole effort to stop the evil.

Christians war with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Eph. 6:17); and with prayer to the Father that through His Son, who sits at His right hand as King of Kings (I Pet. 3:22, Rev. 1:5).

The problem is that so few of us ever write a letter to the editor, call a radio talk show or write a senator. When it comes to such evils most use the sword of the Spirit like it was a butter knife. And what about prayer? How long has it been since you have heard a brother pray for the baby killing industry in this country to be shut down?

If you want some resource material on such things phone the Right To Life news service in Washington at 202-626-8800. If you want bumper stickers or precious feet pins, or other pro-life materials phone “Victory Won,” 1-800-676-7258 and ask for their free catalog.

JEFF WALLING AND JOHN 17

Barry Gilreath

In John 17 we find Christ’s fervent prayer for the unity of believers. Biblical unity exists where truth is received and practiced (vv. 17-21). How tragic it is when some twist Christ’s prayer to advocate the very opposite for which He prayed. Such occurred on March 30, 1990 at the Soul Winning Workshop in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Jeff Walling presented a lecture entitled, “That They All May Be One.” He said, “And I really want you to get used to being with a lot of Christians, because in spite of what some of my brothers think, I think there’s going to be a ton of folks that God’s going to give grace and mercy to...I don’t think...a small crowd.” He then discussed unity in the context of John 17 and asked, “What if we were at a gathering where there were people sitting next to you who didn’t go to a Church of Christ? Now they believed in Jesus. They loved the Lord...they are not fellowshipping in a building that says ‘Church of Christ’ on it. Now just free your mind up for that bizarre possibility.” He later said, “Jesus doesn’t say...the obedient might be one...that the ‘Church of Christers’ might be one..He prays for those who will believe in me...put their faith and trust in me...the text says ‘believers’...I’ll tell you that in order to preach the text, we can’t get into this lesson without appreciating the fact that Jesus asked that we would throw the calf rope around all of those who just believe in Him, and pray and work for the unity of all for God. But before I hold your hand, I’ve gotta check your hand out. Whose hand am I holding here? Lands sake, if we have to, let’s pass out gloves, but let’s HOLD HANDS! Whatever it takes! I recognize that unity for you may mean at first reaching across the aisle to grasp the hand of the person who’s across your aisle...but brothers and sisters, we’ve got to reach outside the doors...to the hand of every believer in Jesus to seek some kind of oneness.”

Consider the fallacies Jeff Walling taught from John 17.

- 1) The church of Christ was described in denominational terms. What is a “*Church of Christer*”?
- 2) He affirmed a conviction that is in opposition to Christ’s teaching regarding salvation in Matt. 7:21-23 (“*ton of folks*” receiving grace).
- 3) He advocated fellowship with denominations. We are to “*throw the calf rope around all those who just believe in him.*”
- 4) He promoted a denominational understanding of *believers* in John 17 by associating true Christians with those in denominations.
- 5) He advocated degrees of fellowship (“*some kind of oneness*”).

This speech is only one example of the error he espouses. Brother Walling’s words and associations prove him to be a false teacher. He must be recognized as such by faithful brethren. Dalton, GA