

# The University Heights Messenger

July 11, 2010

## **“Baptized...In The Name Of Jesus Christ”**

For the second time in as many weeks I have received a request to discuss a portion of Peter’s instruction to the people in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost which we can read about in Acts 2:38. You’ll recall that in last weeks bulletin we talked about the gift of the Holy Spirit from the last part of the verse. This time we want to discuss what it means to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.

First we need to mention that there is a textual variation in this place. Manuscript evidence exists that provides this alternate reading: “baptized...on (upon) the name of Jesus Christ.” If that is what Peter told the people on Pentecost, he was obviously focusing upon the authority of Christ. In other words, he was telling them to be baptized because Jesus commands it. Such an understanding is abundantly supported by Scripture, particularly as one considers Jesus’ own words from Matthew 28:18-20.

It is also possible that the phrase is part of a “baptismal formula,” words spoken by the one administering the baptism before the one being baptized is immersed. Each one of us has heard that formula stated before baptisms for as long as we have been in the church.

However, Acts 2:38 is not the only place in the book of Acts where we find people being baptized in the name of Jesus. The questioner also mentioned Acts 10:48 where Peter commands Cornelius and his household to be baptized in the name of our Lord. These instances have naturally led to a question. Why is it that after Jesus Himself said to baptize in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit we find Peter baptizing only in the name of Jesus? Is

there not some inconsistency there? I do not believe there is.

An interesting position that was suggested to me some time ago is that the person receiving the baptism determined the words stated at the time of their baptism. This would mean that the words of Matthew 28 were to be used of the convert from paganism, one who had been without God in the world, knowing not the Father, Son, or Holy Spirit. Converts from Judaism, or those who had been proselytes to Judaism, needed only to make a confession of Jesus Christ before their baptism to prove that they possessed the same faith in Him that they had already possessed in the Father and the Spirit. You must determine for yourself the validity of this position.

Several other views have been posited to deal with the difference in formula between Jesus and Peter. I will mention two of the more credible positions. Some have claimed that to baptize in the name of one of the Godhead is to necessarily involve the other two. Obviously there is truth to that for the entire Godhead is active in baptism. Others have claimed that Luke merely sets forth an abbreviated form of the longer formula. This could also be true for it is common for the inspired writers to quote other portions of the sacred Scripture loosely, making slight variations to the passage they are quoting without in any sense changing the meaning of the original words.

Our baptisms would be useless were it not for Jesus Christ and what He has done. Peter told the people on Pentecost that they would receive the remission of their sins once they had repented and been baptized. That remission, or forgiveness, takes place because it is in baptism that a person comes

in contact with Jesus' cleansing blood (Romans 6:3-5). So, when a person is baptized in the name of Jesus Christ they are baptized by His authority. Also, they are indicating that they understand it is only through His sacrificial work that their baptism can have any power whatsoever.

### **Note**

I will be away on vacation July 10-17. As I considered it I realized that there is not much point in publishing a bulletin for the 18 as I will not be in a position to update the sick list or the events of note on the back page. Thus, the bulletin will take a week off and will not be printed for the 18th. However, I have listed the Bible reading for the week of 7/18-7/24 here.

**Mon-2** Kgs 3-4, Ps 138, 2 Pet 1-3 **Tue-2** Kgs 5-6, Ps 139, 1 Jn 2:1-2 **Wed-2** Kgs 7-8, Ps 140, 1 Jn 3-5, **Thu-2** Kgs 9-10, Ps 141, 2 Jn, 3 Jn, Jude **Fri-2** Kgs 11-13, Ps 142, Rev 1 **Sat-2** Kgs 14-15, Ps 143, Rev 2-3

### **IN NEED OF PRAYERS:**

**Glenn Kimberlin** remains house bound.

**Glen Davis** has been doing better with his medications. He returns to the doctor July 13.

**Vera Howerton** (Jeff's mother) has been diagnosed with bladder cancer and is currently recovering from surgery in Bowling Green. The course of her treatment has not yet been determined.

**Ruel Baker** remains in need of prayers as he continues to be treated.

**Robert Brundige**, Richard's brother, is in Parkside Manor in Cynthiana dealing with some issues. **Sarah** Brundige, Richard's mother, is in Cambridge Place Nursing Home and in need of our prayer.

**Harley Miller** has been able to return home. He is very frail and living alone now so we pray for his health and safety.

Let us remember **the Shamus family** after the passing of Rick.

Let's also remember **Esmeralda Agustin, David Day and his wife, Gail Stein, Glenn Goldy, Shannon Gilbert, Harley Miller, Chuck McDavitt.**

### **UPCOMING EVENTS:**

The men's meeting has been moved to July 18. Men, please make your plans to attend.

Remember to check the bulletin board each week for gospel meetings and other events taking place at local congregations.

### **BIBLE READING SCHEDULE FOR 7/11-7/17:**

**Sunday:**1 Kgs 12-13, Ps 131, Heb 10

**Monday:**1 Kgs 14-15, Ps 132, Heb 11

**Tuesday:**1 Kgs 16-17, Ps 133, Heb 12-13

**Wednesday:**1 Kgs 18, Ps 134, Jas 1-2

**Thursday:**1 Kgs 19-20, Ps 135, Jas 3-5

**Friday:**1 Kgs 21-22, Ps 136, 1 Pet 1-2

**Saturday:**2 Kgs 1-2, Ps 137, 1 Pet 3-5

### **SERMON TOPICS:**

Sunday AM. Matt Thompson preaching

Sunday PM. Garry Banks preaching

**Remember to makes use of the box in the back for sermon, bulletin, or prayer requests.**