

## *If You Still Have Doubts*

(Robert C. Veil, Jr.)

Sometimes in speaking with people about their salvation, they are readily able to grasp the straightforward teaching of the Bible. They understand the basic steps of obedience to the gospel, yet they still hesitate.

If you can see that the Bible clearly requires faith, repentance, confession, and baptism in order to be saved, you may still be wrestling with some doubts. You may be thinking, for example, that you were baptized as a child, and wondering whether that is acceptable to God. It's good that you are wondering about that, because your soul is at stake! Is infant baptism scriptural? Do the Scriptures authorize the baptizing of infants?

The truth is, the Bible nowhere directs adults to baptize infant children. In fact, in every case of Bible baptism, the person being baptized was responsible enough to understand what they were doing. They knew enough to understand that they were lost, (Acts 2:38). They knew that they needed to be saved from their sins, (1 Pet. 3:21). They understood that baptism is for the purpose of having their sins washed away, (Acts 22:16). Infants can do none of those things. Think about it, does a pure, innocent baby need to be cleansed from sin? Of course not. Babies are the very picture of moral purity and innocence. That's why Jesus said, "Suffer the little children, and forbid them not, to come unto me: for to such belongeth the kingdom of heaven," (Mt. 19:14). He would not have directed his disciples to "become like little children" if children are sinful and in need of salvation, (Mt. 18:1-6). Is not until a person is able to understand the difference between right and wrong, to appreciate the nature of sin and evil in their lives. that they become responsible before God.

Maybe you may have been sprinkled or had water poured upon you at an early age, and now you are wondering whether that is an acceptable substitute for Bible baptism. Another good question, because, again, your eternal salvation is dependent upon this. You need to make sure you are right with God.

Interestingly, nowhere in the Bible is baptism defined as sprinkling or pouring water upon a person. Baptism is consistently described as a *burial*, (see Rom. 6:1ff; Col. 2:12). In fact, the English word "baptism" is merely a transliteration of the Greek word, *baptidzo*, which means to dip or plunge. Therefore, a person who has merely been sprinkled or had water poured upon them has not actually been baptized.

You may have other doubts as well. You may be thinking that your mother or father or other relatives who have already died were never baptized for the remission of their sins. What will your obedience to the gospel do to them? Would it somehow be admitting that they were wrong, or that they are lost?

When you stop and think about it, none of us should base our obedience to the gospel upon what others did or did not do, no matter how near and dear to us they may be. If they were wrong, would they want us to be wrong also? Wouldn't it be better to simply do what we know is right, and leave the judging of others up to God? Jesus said, "No man, having put his hand to the plow, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God," (Lk. 9:62). Each of us must commit to follow Jesus Christ. We must do so with a heart of faith and trust, and leave everything to him. Ultimately, what others do (or do not do) makes no difference.

Now that you know what is right in the sight of God, doesn't it make sense for you to humbly obey him? Would it not be absurd, having come to a knowledge of the truth, to

back away and reject it now? What a dangerous and foolish course of action! Far better it is to cast away your doubts, humbly submit to what the Bible clearly teaches, and also try to show the truth to others while we can!

Whatever your doubts and reasons for hesitation may be, only you can resolve them. Only you can put your fears and hesitancy aside, and do what you know the Bible teaches. Only you can obey the Gospel for yourself, from a pure heart and a sincere faith. Here's hoping you will do that now, while this message is fresh upon your heart.