

# BOOK OF GALATIANS

## *“Baptized into Christ”*

Scripture Reading: GALATIANS 3:23-29

- ) **SLIDES 1-6**. Bible Jeopardy!
- ) **SLIDES 7-8**. Read today’s Scripture text.
- ) **SLIDE 9**. Today we continue in our expository study of the Book of GALATIANS. This is message #25. I have titled today’s message *“Baptized into Christ”* (v27).
- ) Today’s text contains two issues that are controversial in today’s church. We will cover one of those issues today. But before we get to that, let’s once again cover some basic rules that we need to know about proper Bible interpretation.
- ) Allow me to begin this with a quote. The quote I’m about to give was spoken by me here in this church on August 2, 2009. If you were here that day, I am sure you will remember it.
- ) **SLIDE 10**. *“One of the best things that has happened in the past 2,000 years is that the Bible has been translated into many different languages and put into print in those languages. Now we can read it for ourselves.”*
- ) *“One of the worst things that has happened in the past 2,000 years is that the Bible has been translated into many different languages and put into print in those languages. Now we can interpret it for ourselves.”*
- ) **SLIDE 11**. Underline words. Martin Luther – can of worms.
- ) Giving some people a Bible and telling them to interpret it for themselves would be like giving me a physics book and telling me to build a rocket engine. My rocket engine just might end up becoming an atomic bomb. And that’s what many Bible interpretations have resulted in. Disasters.

- ) **SLIDE 12.** Allow me to introduce you to a word that may be new in your vocabulary. It's the word "*hermeneutics*." In other words, there is a science, a logical procedure, to how the Bible must be interpreted. One cannot just go willy nilly through the text, pick a verse, and say "*Look! Here it is!*"
- ) **SLIDE 13.** Part of this hermeneutical science process is EXEGESIS and EISEGESIS. Not according to our culture.
- ) **SLIDE 14.** Paraphrase Bibles are dangerous because they have a bent to use the translator's bias and agenda in the translation. The Living Bible. The Message Bible. The Passion Translation.
- ) **SLIDE 15.** 20/20 rule. What is the context of the passage? And we also know that Scripture interprets what? Scripture.
- ) How do I do my hermeneutics? I look towards theologians who are far wiser than I to do this work for me. And I promise you, that list is very short. And it contains names from centuries ago (Spurgeon, Luther, Calvin, Augustine of Hippo). These men have already plowed this ground and I trust their hermeneutics.
- ) So, let's use what we have learned about hermeneutics to help us interpret our first controversial issue from today's text.
- ) **SLIDE 16.** What is this controversial issue? It would be the title of this message: "*Baptized into Christ*." What does that mean to be baptized into Christ? And how can these few words be so misinterpreted and controversial?
- ) I'm convinced that if you have been following along with our study of GALATIANS, that it would be pretty simple to interpret this passage correctly. Why? Because we know the context of what the apostle Paul has been saying up to this point. Again, another reason to do expository preaching.
- ) So, what does it mean to be baptized into Christ and what does it not mean? First, what does it mean.

- ) **SLIDE 17.** The word baptism means “*to immerse.*” And the word “*immerse*” means to “*to plunge into something that surrounds or covers.*” We can be immersed into an interesting TV series. We can be immersed in a good book. We can be immersed into water. To plunge into something.
- ) **SLIDE 18.** And the word “*baptism*” gives us the same ideas. In this context in v27, the word “*baptism*” must not be taken in a “*immersed into water*” sense. It must be used in the sense of something that surrounds or covers.
- ) What Paul is saying is that all true Christians have, by placing their saving faith in Jesus Christ, been spiritually immersed (baptized) into (surrounded by) the person of Christ.
- ) **SLIDE 19.** We see the apostle Paul using this exact same analogy in ROMANS 6:3-4. Explain.
- ) **SLIDE 20.** Spiritual gifts. 1CORINTHIANS 12:12-13. Explain.
- ) **SLIDE 21.** GALATIANS 3:27.
- ) There are pastors and churches and denominations that will tell you and I that water baptism is necessary for salvation and that is what this verse (and others) is telling us.
- ) **SLIDE 22.** But their key verse to support their belief is ACTS 2:37-38. They will claim that this verse commands water baptism.
- ) I must disagree with them based on sound hermeneutics. This verse (and others like GAL 3:27) does not and cannot mean water baptism. I can say with 100% confidence that water baptism is not necessary for salvation.
- ) How Mike? Because what has the context in GALATIANS been telling us up to this point? What is the controversy in these churches at Galatia? The Judaizers were pushing what on to the new converts? Circumcision. A work.
- ) **SLIDE 23.** ACTS 15:1.

- ) **SLIDE 24.** Same verse in today's terms. It is a very common belief in the Stone/Campbell churches (Restoration Movement) that baptism is necessary for salvation.
- ) **SLIDE 25.** 1 CORINTHIANS 1:17. If baptism is necessary for salvation, then this verse would not say what it says. If baptism was necessary for salvation, then Christ would have sent Paul and everyone else to baptize. But He didn't. He sent Paul and others to proclaim only that which saves. The gospel.
- ) Let's remember the basic rules for proper Bible interpretation. CONTEXT. The context of GALATIANS chapters 1-3 is clearly teaching that works cannot contribute to one's salvation. And baptism would be a work just like circumcision.
- ) And I hate to sound hard, callous, and cold, but Paul says that those who teach that circumcision is necessary for salvation are anathema (GAL 1:8-9). So, what does that say about those people today who teach that baptism is necessary for salvation? The same thing.
- ) Ever wonder why Jesus says in MATT 7 that the road to life is narrow and few find it? Ever wonder why Jesus says in MATT 7 that many will say to me on that day "*Lord, Lord, didn't we do this and do that*" and Jesus responds, "*Depart from me you workers of iniquity.*"
- ) If you are truly a Christian, if the saving gospel message has transformed you from death to life, if you have the Spirit of God dwelling within you, then you (and I) have been baptized into Christ. Not by an act involving water, but by the regeneration of the Holy Spirit. To the praise and glory of God! Amen!
- ) Next week we will look at a second controversial issue found in this text from GALATIANS 3:23-29.

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