

through being baptized!

You can call "Baptism *because of* the forgiveness of sins" *Bible baptism*, but you'll never find it in the Bible. Bible baptism by any other name will still be Bible baptism; but anything other than Bible baptism will *never* be pleasing to God, whether or not you call it "baptism."

*Conclusion...*

God has specified the method and purpose for baptism. Just because someone gets wet or feels good about what he's done does not make him baptized. Were you immersed in water for the remission of sins? It's commanded in God's word, and expected of you.

# The Carriage Drive Messenger



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NEWSWORTHY NOTES:

*This section removed to preserve member's privacy*

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## TIMES OF SERVICES

**Sunday:** Bible Study 10:00am  
Morning Worship 10:50am  
Evening Worship 6:30pm  
**Wednesday:** Bible Study 7:30pm

## WHEN BAPTISM ISN'T BAPTISM

by Bob Pulliam

**W**hen is something not what it is? "It is always what it is!" you might reply. True enough, but beware of substitutions! As the announcer on TV will warn, "Accept no cheap imitations!" And so there are times when something is called by the name of the original, when it really is not the same. Baptism is a very good example of this. There are two very popular avenues taken by the sectarians in calling their phony practices "baptism".

*Practice One...*

The first means is by calling sprinkling and/or pouring "baptism". We are told that baptism is still baptism, even if it is accomplished by sprin-

Our Gospel Meeting is only three weeks away!

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klung or pouring. To prove this point, the dictionary is very quickly removed from the shelf and consulted on this ancient word. Ignored is the fact that the dictionary is a lexicon of modern word usage, giving no information on its use in Jesus' time. It is important, then, that we look back to the time of Jesus and determine what baptism actually was, and whether or not it is important to follow that pattern.

The Bible indicates that baptism requires much water (Jn 3:23). The reason can be seen in passages like Romans 6:3-5 and Colossians 2:12, which indicate that baptism is a burial. Philip and the Eunuch "went down into the water... and he baptized him", they then "came up out of the water..." (Acts 8:38f) Why did they go "down into the water" when there was undoubtedly drinking water in the chariot! After all, just a few drops will do! And why did they get in the water when Philip could have bent over and scooped some up in his hand? Why? Because Philip had to bury or immerse the Eunuch in water! This is why John the baptist had to have "much water", and why he and Jesus went down into the water (Mt 3:16)... The word "baptize" or "baptism" means to immerse, dip, or submerge.

You might be able to call something by a different name, and it still remain the same (*e.g.* a rose); but you cannot change the thing being named, call it by the same name, and expect it to be the same. You could take the act of murder and call it baptism, but it certainly would not make it so. The same is true with sprinkling or pouring.

Is it important? A casual reading of Romans 6:3-17 gives us an emphatic "yes!" The act of burying the person in water pictures the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. By submitting ourselves to this act, we associate (by obedience) ourselves with Jesus' death and resurrection. Sprinkling and pouring simply cannot bring that picture across!

### *Practice Two...*

The second means is by calling "immersion **because of** the forgiveness of sins" scriptural baptism. If you have undergone some type of "baptism", you need to ask yourself why you were baptized. Sometimes, the best way to know the answer is to recall what you were asked to confess just before the act. For example, you may have been asked: "Do you believe that God for Christ's sake has pardoned your sins?..." That is a common confession today, and it is very likely that you were asked that. If so, and you said yes, then you were baptized **because of** the forgiveness of sins. Look at what you confessed. You've not yet gotten into the water and you've affirmed that your sins have already been forgiven. This expresses purpose, and purpose is what makes baptism what it is. Otherwise, the kids down at the swimming hole are baptized most every day of

the summertime. And what about those lascivious people down at the clothing optional (nude) beach? Are they baptized when they jump in the water? The reason for the act determines whether or not it is Bible baptism. Let's look at the Bible and see what reason or purpose must be in the heart for an act of immersion to be baptism.

In Acts 2:38 Peter told a multitude of people to "repent and be baptized... for the forgiveness of your sins". The word "for" expresses purpose. These people were to "repent... for the forgiveness" of sins. By the same reasoning they were to "be baptized... for the forgiveness" of sins. Were they to repent **because** they were forgiven; or were they to repent **in order to receive** forgiveness? The answer is obvious, especially when compared to such passages as Luke 13:3ff; 24:47; and Acts 3:19. It is also the same answer that must be given to the purpose for baptism because both stand on the same side of the "for". Both lay down the conditions for receiving. Both are done **in order to receive** forgiveness.

Incidentally, "for the forgiveness of sins" in Acts 2:38 is worded (in the Greek) exactly the same way in Matthew 26:28. Here Jesus said that His blood was poured out for many "for forgiveness of sins." Was Christ's blood poured out **because of** the forgiveness of sins? No! It was poured out **in order to** procure forgiveness!

In Acts 22:16 Paul was told to wash away his sins. Turn to that passage and note how he was to accomplish this. "arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord." Paul was told to be baptized. "calling on the name of the Lord" is the way it was to be accomplished. "Calling on the name of the Lord" equals appealing to His power and authority. The only way to do such is through compliance with His word, **and** the **only** way to do that is to be baptized! Baptized? Baptized "for the forgiveness of your sins" or in order to wash away your sins. Here again I must point out that purpose is what makes immersion "baptism". If it's not the purpose covered in these passages, it's **not** Bible baptism.

Notice that baptism is the point at which a person clothes himself with Christ: "all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." (Gal 3:27). It is the point at which a person gets into Christ: "do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?" (Rom 6:3). This also tells me that baptism is the point at which I reach the cleansing blood of Christ, which was shed in his death ("baptized into His death"). The next verse (6:4) tells me when I begin to walk in the newness of life -- when I rise from that watery grave of baptism. The next verse tells me that I can partake in the likeness of Christ's resurrection **if** I am "united with Him in the likeness of His death" (Rom 6:5) Something that is only accomplished