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What Does Being The "Remnant" Teach Us?

to Christ (Lk. 13:22), and saw the connection between Christ's teaching and what most people were doing. That God's spiritual people are the remnant, or the few, is a truth seen time and again in the Scriptures.

When thinking about the few or the remnant, remember Noah? In his day, "few, that is, eight souls were saved by water" (1 Pet. 3:20). Though there were vast multitudes following Christ, there came a time when "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him" (Jn. 6:66). To those who "remained" (see def.), specifically, to the twelve, Jesus asked, "Will ye also go away?" (Jn. 6:67). This question elicited one of the greatest responses ever (Jn. 6:68)! Further, in New Testament times, we find that being a Christian was something the few did — not the many! We see this as God's people were looked upon as a "sect" in Acts 24:5 (A sect is a "body of men separating themselves from others and following their own tenets ... a suggestion of reproach," Thayer's, p. 16).

Today, it is no different. Though many describe themselves as "Christians," there are few who truly are Christians as God describes. Why do I say this? There are a number of reasons. One reason is that some claim to be "Christians," but have not submitted to the Lord's plan for salvation (Mk. 16:16). Many today have the mistaken idea that if you believe in God, are reasonably good, and don't get into a lot of legal trouble, then you must be a Christian. This is not right. Too, some claim to be "Christians" while belonging to a denomination. They have been fooled. It takes more than mere religious affiliation to be a Christian in the eyes of God. Based upon this, we know that the majority of those claiming to be Christians are not so. This means God's people are the remnant, the few, just as He had said long ago!

By God referring to His people as a "remnant," what does this tell us? This teaches us that not everyone will accept the Lord's plan of salvation. Unfortunately, some today teach a doctrine contradictory to Scripture called "universalism". This doctrine says that all people on earth will be saved by our all-loving God. This is simply not true. If it were, for one thing, there would be no sense in referring to God's spiritual people as a "remnant," for all would be saved, and there would be none lost. Further, the term "remnant" teaches us that not everyone is pleasing in the sight of God. The "remnant" pleases Him, but not everyone does! Therefore, I need to learn what pleases Him, and obey (Matt. 7:21; Rev. 22:14). We read of a "remnant" in Romans 11:5, who are likened to the "remnant" (7000) in Elijah's day (Rom. 11:4; 1 Kings 19:18). What made these 7000 stand out? They had not "bowed the knee to the image of Baal." In other words, they continued to be faithful to God. The apostle Paul then says, "Even so then at this present time also there is a remnant according to the election of grace." Are you among the "remnant"?

Conclusion

Just as in Bible days, there is also now a remnant of God's people. It is those who willingly submit to the will of God in all things! If we refuse to "bow the knee" to the various gods of this world; if we turn and lovingly obey the Father; we can be a part of this "remnant" as well. Let us not allow anything to stand between us and being right in the sight of God. Today is the day of salvation (II Cor. 6:2). Friend, are you among God's remnant? Are you a Christian (Acts 11:26)? If not, what is stopping you from doing so? What is hindering you (Acts 8:36)?

Credit: www.southside-churchofchrist.com ♦



The Voice of Truth

August 1, 2010

Promises
By Jimmy Pettigrew

"Seeing that his divine power hath granted unto us all things that pertain unto life and godliness, through the knowledge of him that called us by his own glory and virtue; whereby he hath granted unto us his precious and exceeding great promises; that through these ye may become partakers of the divine nature, having escaped from the corruption that is in the world by lust" (2 Peter 1:3-4).

God's promises are great and precious. They have been made possible because of God's glory and virtue. Peter stresses that these precious promises enable one to become a partaker of the divine nature. God promised the Messiah (Genesis 3:15), and in the fullness of time (Galatians 4:4) sent His Son. God promised the Kingdom of Christ would never be destroyed (Daniel 2:44). The Lord will come again (Acts 1:11; 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18); He promised the resurrection (1 Corinthians 15:22; John 4:28-29); The judgment (Romans 2:5-6; 2 Corinthians 5:10; Hebrews 9:27); Hell for the wicked (Matthew 25:46; Romans 2:8-9; 2 Thessalonians 1:8-9); Salvation for the baptized believer (Mark 16:16); Spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3); Salvation to the obedient (Hebrews 5:8-9); The crown of life to the faithful (Revelation 2:10; 2 Timothy 4:8) and even material blessings to those who put God and His Kingdom first (Matthew 6:33).

(1 Thessalonians 4:17); this earth shall be burned up (2 Peter 3:7-10). God has never promised that the Lord will establish a kingdom when He comes. The Bible teaches that the Lord's kingdom was established upon Pentecost of Acts 2; that the Lord is now reigning over His kingdom. God has never promised to save everybody. The Bible teaches that provisions have been made for all men (John 3:16); that God wants all men to be saved (2 Peter 3:9); that the Savior's invitation must be extended to all men (Matthew 11:28). Specific conditions must be met! God never promised to save those who would not obey Him. The Bible teaches saving faith is an obedient faith (Romans 1:5; James 2:14ff); He is the author of eternal salvation to those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:8); Vengeance will be taken upon those who obey not (2 Thessalonians 1:8). God has never promised to save those outside the church. The Bible teaches the saved are added to the church (Acts 2:47); The Lord is the Savior of the body (Ephesians 1:22-23; 5:23 Colossians 1:18, 24), God never promised to save those who refuse to be baptized. The Bible teaches baptism is essential to salvation (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16; 1 Peter 2:20-21); Baptism puts one into Christ (Galatians 3:27); every spiritual blessings is in Christ (Ephesians 1:3).

Let us be careful not to base our hopes upon things assumed! ♦

God has never promised that the Lord will return to the earth. The Bible teaches we shall meet the Lord in the air

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

- Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
- Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
- Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
- Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
- Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
- Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

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How to Contact Us	Our Address	Schedule of Assembly
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Does Baptism Wash Away Past Unlawful Marriages?

By H. E. Phillips

"Does baptism wash away past unlawful marriages?" That is the subject assigned to me for this special issue. I first heard of this idea many years ago, but not much was said about it until the last few years. Some men have always done what they wanted to do, regardless of what the Lord said. Any practice that transgresses God's word and involves a lot of people will somehow be "justified" by those who want to continue in it.

A complicated research program will begin amassing "evidence" to prove that the Bible does not mean what it obviously teaches. Thus, justification is found to do that which God's word does not allow.

The Nature of Marriage

"*Marriage is honorable in all, and the bed undefiled*" (**Heb. 13:4**). In the beginning God instituted marriage and regulated it by his word. He did not plan for marriage to be dissolved except by death. Marriage is a physical, fleshly union; it is not a spiritual union. They are no more twain but one flesh (**Matt. 19:6**). Death ends all marriages (**Rom. 7:3**). Baptism has nothing to do with our marriage, but it is essential to our spiritual bond in Christ.

Adultery and fornication are sinful just as lying, stealing, murder and idolatry are sinful. These sins are equally applicable to those in Christ and those in the world. Jesus taught that divorcing and remarrying results in committing adultery. If a man puts away his wife for fornication, she is guilty of sin (adultery). If he puts her away for any other cause and marries another, he commits adultery; and he causes her to commit adultery. Any man who marries that one who is put away, commits adultery, and there is no exception clause (**Matt. 5:32; 19:9; Mark 10:11-12; Luke 16:18**). Any twist or perversion of Scripture that contradicts, modifies or invalidates these plain statements of Jesus is false doctrine.

Now some are teaching that baptism "washes" away all previous unlawful marriages, and the one with whom he/she is married at the time of baptism is the scriptural spouse for the rest of their lives. There is no way that can be true.

What Is Baptism?

The New Testament teaches that baptism is a condition for the forgiveness of sins. Peter and the other apostles

told the multitude of people on Pentecost to "*repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*" (**Acts 2:38**). Ananias said to Saul, "*And now why tarriest thou? Arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord*" (**Acts 22:16**). The only thing that baptism "washes" away is the past sins of the penitent believer! Baptism does not provide for forgiveness of future sins - sins not yet committed.

Baptism does not change any human relationship on earth. It changes man's relationship to God. We are baptized into Christ (**Gal. 3:27**); into the one body, which is the church (**1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22-23**). Baptism saves us (**1 Pet. 3:21**). In baptism we are made free from sin, and become servants of righteousness (**Rom. 6:16-17**).

All deeds, words and thoughts that are sinful before baptism, are equally sinful after baptism. If a man and woman should engage in sexual sin before baptism, that same act is as sinful after baptism. One who engages in prostitution cannot continue in that sinful conduct after baptism. He/she cannot continue the practice of any sin (**Rom. 6:1-18**). In like manner, one who puts away his/her spouse for any cause other than fornication, and marries another, commits adultery; and whosoever marries the put away one commits adultery. Now if that is an adulterous relationship before baptism, it is an adulterous relationship after baptism.

Faith Is Essential to Scriptural Baptism

The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to the Jew and Greek (**Rom. 1:16**). The gospel is addressed to all nations alike, "*For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God*" (**Rom. 3:23**). That means that all men are amenable to the law of Christ, which is the gospel. Hearing the gospel produces faith, which is essential to be baptized (**Rom. 10:17**).

Repentance Is Essential to Scriptural Baptism

Repentance is a command of God for all men, Jew and Gentile alike (**Acts 17:30**). One must repent before he can be baptized (**Acts 2:38; Luke 24:47**). All men must repent or perish (**2 Pet. 3:9**). Godly sorrow for sin leads to repentance (**2 Cor. 7:10**). The knowledge of the goodness of God leads to repentance (**Rom. 2:4**). The judgment of God causes men to repent (**Acts 17:30-31; 2 Cor. 5:10**).

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Repentance is a function of the will that resolves to abandon all sin and diligently pursue the will of God. It begins with a knowledge of sin and the conviction that one is a sinner. It is a sincere regret for sin; a resolution to stop sinning now - a reformation of life and a restoration of all things possible to righteous conduct before God.

True repentance does not ask what price is to be paid; there is no desire to save face; no self-justification. The worth and value of past deeds and present standing are worthless. His sins become loathsome and repulsive. He is willing to do anything God requires of him, no matter how painful. Only God's word will produce true repentance.

A man and woman who are in an unlawful marriage must repent before they can be baptized. What will repentance require of them before they can be scripturally baptized? They must cease the sinning, which means to dissolve the adulterous marriage. Their sin is adultery. John the Baptist told Herod, who had married his brother Philip's wife, "*It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife*" (**Mark 6:17-18**).

Some argue that "adultery" in **Matthew 19:9** is the act of marrying and does not refer to sexual sins. That is not so! Jesus said if a man "looks" on a woman to lust after

her, he has committed adultery already with her in his heart (**Matt. 5:28**). That is not marriage; it is the act of sexual sin in the heart with the spouse of another.

If baptism washes away unlawful marriages, and makes them right, what about the man who is married to two wives at the same time, may he keep both of his wives after he has been baptized? If not, why not? Which one should he keep, since he had both when he was "baptized"? Does repentance demand that he put away one wife? If unlawful marriages are made right by baptism, why would not the homosexuals who "marry" each other be made right by baptism so that they could continue to live together? Would you baptize two homosexuals who intended to continue living together? The farther down this road one goes, the more unbelievable it becomes. Baptism will not wash away polygamy and homosexual marriages. It is no wonder that the advocates of this unholy doctrine claim that aliens are not amenable to the law of Christ. If the alien is not amenable to the law of Christ, he is not a sinner. Where there is no law, there is no transgression (**Rom. 4:15**). Sin is the transgression of the law (**1 John 3:4**). If he is not under the law of Christ, he does not sin and does not need baptism, and there is no need to talk about what his baptism will wash away. Marriage is not a function of the church, and baptism does nothing to marriage. *Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com* ♦

"The Remnant" Jarrod Jacobs

The Bible word "remnant" means, "rest, residue, ... remainder" (**Brown-Driver-Briggs**, p. 984). When reading the Bible, we find that the word "remnant" is used quite frequently. At times, the word "remnant" was used to describe an amount of material left over after making the curtains for the Tabernacle, or what was left over after offering a sacrifice (**Ex. 26:12; Lev. 2:3, 5:13**). At other times, we find the word "remnant" referring to people. Moses and Joshua talked about Og and "*the remnant of the giants*" (**Deut. 3:11; Josh. 12:4, 13:12**). Our focus in this article, however, is to see how the word "remnant" is used in describing the people of God.

God's People Are Always Described As A "Remnant."

Yes, God called His people a "*remnant*" on several occasions (**Isa. 10:20-22, 37:4; Jer. 23:3; Joel 2:32; Amos 5:15; Micah 2:12, 4:7, 5:7-8; Zeph. 2:7, 9, 3:13; Zech. 8:12; Rom. 9:27, 11:5**). In what way(s) did God consider His people a remnant? First, when describing those who

would survive the Babylonian captivity, He called the survivors the "*remnant*" (**Amos 5:15; Micah 2:12**). These were the people who remained after the Babylonian captivity to return to their homes and rebuild and repair what had been destroyed so they could start anew (See: Ezra, Nehemiah).

When referring to spiritual Israel, this term "remnant" was also used (**Isa. 10:20-22; Joel 2:32; Micah 5:7-8; Zeph. 3:13; Rom. 9:24-27**). In this case, it is applied to those who remained faithful to God in the face of earthly persecution and pressure placed upon them to leave the Lord. God's spiritual people are not the greatest in number, but the fewest (**Deut. 7:7**)! When He was on earth, Christ said that the many are headed for destruction, while the few are headed toward eternal life (**Matt. 7:13-14**). Luke records that there was a question preceding this where Christ was asked, "*Lord, are there few that be saved?*" (**Lk. 13:23-24**). Obviously, someone was listening

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