

## THE APPEAL

### Introduction

Now, John or Susie, I promised to share the story of the Bible with you when we began this study.

I have shown you the beautiful picture of the church described by God in the New Testament. That church is the climax of all the good things God has done for us.

The only thing we haven't discussed is how people in that day got into that church. If we're going to "restore" that church to this 20th century, then we'll have to also find out how those folks became Christians in the first century.

Would you like to complete that part of the study, too?

(Pause for their answer.)

### OBEDIENCE

Obedience is the key word we should use here. It is the very thing we have found repeated throughout the Bible, haven't we?

#### 1. MOST THINGS ARE FAMILIAR TO US.

In fact, most people agree on the things which men ought to do even today. For instance:

- a. Hebrews 11:6 says we must believe, and I don't know of anyone who denies that, do you?
- b. Acts 17:30 teaches we must repent, and everybody agrees on that.
- c. Certainly everybody agrees we ought to confess Jesus.  
(Note Romans 10:10; Matthew 10:32; I Timothy 6:12; Acts 8:37)

#### 2. ONLY BAPTISM SEEMS TO CAUSE ANYONE TROUBLE.

- a. We need to look back into New Testament times and see how they understood this subject. That ought to give us a clue for how we should feel about it.
- b. The first question we ought to ask is, WHAT IS BAPTISM?  
(Let's read some verses to find out.)

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|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) John 3:23                      | - Shows it took "much water." |
| (2) Acts 8:36                      | - Came to the water.          |
| (3) Acts 8:38                      | - Went down into the water.   |
| (4) Acts 8:39                      | - Came up out of the water.   |
| (5) Romans 6:4;<br>Colossians 2:12 | - It was like a burial.       |

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Ask person: "WHICH FORM OF BAPTISM FULFILLS ALL THOSE CONDITIONS -  
SPRINKLING, POURING, OR IMMERSION?"

c. The second question is - BAPTISM IS FOR WHOM?

- (1) Mark 16:16 - Those who can believe.
- (2) Acts 2:38 - Those who can repent.

ASK: CAN INFANTS BELIEVE AND REPENT? CAN ADULTS?

d. The third question is - WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM?

(1) First, do you mind if I ask you what you have been taught is the purpose of baptism? (Here are some sample questions to ask before you study the point!)

- (a) WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF BAPTISM?
- (b) WHAT DOES IT DO FOR YOU?
- (c) CAN YOU BE SAVED WITHOUT IT?
- (d) IS BAPTISM ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY?

(Tell them you are trying to get their thinking clear on what they believe first.)

(Use one or any combination of these questions to bring out their understanding of baptism. If you do not do this before the study, they will assume after your study that they believed what you taught all along! Only by committing them in advance can you avoid that problem.) It is best that (with their permission) you write down what they say they believe.

(2) Now, let's see what the scriptures suggest about the purpose of baptism:

- (a) Mark 16:16? - Salvation before or after baptism in this verse?
- (b) Acts 2:38? - Remission of sins before or after baptism?
- (c) Acts 22:16? - Sins washed away before or after baptism?
- (d) Romans 6:4? - Newness of life before or after baptism?
- (e) I Peter 3:21? - Saved before or after baptism?

3. Now, ask them -- HAVE YOU BEEN BAPTIZED AS THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES?  
(Wait for an answer.)

- a. If they say, "Yes," and you know they have not, go back and review the scriptures on that point.
- b. If they say, "No," ask them - WOULD YOU LIKE TO BE BAPTIZED AS THE NEW TESTAMENT TEACHES? If they say, "No," then say:

- (1) I came to share with you my understanding of the word of God. The decision is up to you. I don't plan to pressure you into doing anything against your will. Being a Christian is a free will obedience.
- (2) I'd love to help you:
  - (a) If you have questions, we could study some more.
  - (b) If you want to think about it, I'll visit with you later.
  - (c) If you know this is right, but don't want to do it, then I guess we could re-examine that decision from time to time when you think you're ready.

**THE DECISION IS YOURS.  
I'M JUST A FRIEND TRYING TO HELP.**