

THE FLORAL HEIGHTS INFORMER

www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org

13 December 2009
VOLUME 9; ISSUE 50

**Floral Heights
Church of Christ
1814 Buchanan
Wichita Falls, Texas
76309
(940) 322 - 1650**

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Our Elders:

Mike Chancellor
(322 – 6374)

Tom Witherspoon
(923-6479)

Deacons:

Joe Cronin

Jim Hall

David Witherspoon

Preacher:

John C. Robertson

Baptism for the Dead

I Corinthians 15:29

What is Baptism for the Dead?

Baptism for the dead, vicarious baptism or proxy baptism is the religious practice of baptizing a living person on behalf of an individual who is dead; the living person is acting as the deceased person's proxy... in the practice of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints (or "Mormons"), a living person, acting as proxy, is baptized by immersion on behalf of a deceased person of the same gender. The baptism ritual is as follows: after calling the living proxy by name, the person performing the baptism says, "Having been commissioned of Jesus Christ, I baptize you for and in behalf of [full name of deceased person], who is dead, in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. Amen." The proxy is then immersed briefly in the water... Only an adult male holder of the Melchizedek priesthood who has undergone the Endowment ordinance may baptize others as proxies for the dead.

Basis for Baptizing living people for Dead People:

According to The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the practice of baptism for the dead is based on a revelation received by the prophet Joseph Smith. He first taught the doctrine at the funeral sermon of a deceased member of the Church, Seymour Brunson. In a letter written on October 19, 1840, to the Quorum of the Twelve Apostles of the Church (who were on a mission in the United Kingdom at the time), Smith refers to the passage in **1 Corinthians 15:29** to justify his sermon. The LDS Church teaches that performing baptisms for the dead allows this saving ordinance to be offered to those who have died without accepting or knowing Jesus Christ or his teachings during their mortal lives. It is taught that this is the method by which all who have lived upon the earth will have the opportunity to receive baptism and to thereby enter the Kingdom of God.

Local News:

Welcome to all our visitors:

We pray that you will be edified by our service and that you will ask questions if things are not as you are accustomed to seeing. Please do come back at your every opportunity!

Announcements:

There are some of our members fighting ongoing illnesses and discouragement. Give them a call and let them know you are praying and thinking about them.

This past Sunday evening **Christopher Rush** obeyed the gospel. We praise God for this most important decision in his life. Let us all get to know Christopher and encourage him in his new Christian walk.

New Acts study has now been posted on our website: www.floralheightschurchofchrist.org

Continue to pray for our shut-ins:

Stella Davidson
696-1030 (Home)

Calvin York
692-0489 (Home).

Problems associated with Baptizing live people for the Dead:

Consider the Bible passage justifying the above teaching: "*Else what shall they do that are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why then are they baptized for them?*" (I Corinthians 15:29). To properly understand any given Bible verse the reader must not only take into consideration the context but also one must have a complete picture of the topic under consideration.

Consider first the context of I Corinthians 15. The word "*else*" should prompt the reader to see what was just said. Paul is examining the order of man's future resurrection from the dead (I Cor. 15:22-23). Christ was first raised from the dead. Later, those who belong to Christ will be raised (verse 23). Paul goes on to talk about the **order** of things that bring this world to an "*end*" (see verse 24ff). Then the apostle makes the statement: "*What shall they do that are baptized for the dead?*" Greek - "*hoi baptizomenoi huper ton nekron.*" The Greek phrase is literally translated "*what will they do the ones being baptized on behalf of the dead? If actually dead persons are not raised?*" (Nestle Marshall Interlinear Greek - English New Testament pp. 701). The key word is "*for*" (*huper*; Gk). Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon defines *huper* as "in behalf of... for the sake of a person or thing" (833). If we are baptized "for the sake of" or "on behalf of" dead people being raised from the dead and the dead are not really raised then the question is, "why be baptized" at all? Paul is simply writing in a rhetorical form as he is known for (Cf. the book of Romans).

The thought is "Will you be baptized to be numbered among the dead who will never raise?" The Greek reads a bit different as to how we express ideas in the English but suffice it to say that Paul can certainly not be speaking of a "vicarious baptism" on the part of one Christian for another non-Christian due to the fact that Paul states in Romans 14:12, "*So then each one of us shall give account of himself to God.*" A "vicarious baptism" takes away personal responsibility, faith, and obedience. The point is further carried out in I Cor. 15:30-32 as Paul concludes that if there is no resurrection then we may as well live it up in sin. One's resurrection is the matter under consideration as it relates to baptism for the remission of sins. Simple, isn't it?

John C. Robertson

Reference: The first two paragraphs were copied and edited from wikipedia.org

Is Everything Ok in Your Life?

Introduction:

The apostle Paul gave a list of his life trials in which he listed having anxiety for all the churches (see II Cor. 11:28). Earlier he said, "*I fear lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve in his craftiness, your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity and the purity that is toward Christ*" (II Cor. 11:3). Brethren today often have the same anxiety, concerns, and fear toward others in the body of Christ. We see brethren struggling with their faith, finances, family matters, and their physical health and question if all is Ok with them. This lesson shall examine some problems that we all face in our every day life. Encouragement and actual help from the individual saints might be the key to you pulling yourself out of the rut your in. Though we know that it will only be through the many tribulations one enters heaven we also know, as Paul said, "*the spirit is willing but the flesh is weak*" (see Matt. 26:41; Rom. 7:14ff).

I. Problems with Spirituality:

- A. Attendance / loosing interest
- B. Prayer
- C. Faith

II. Problems within the Family

- A. Husband
- B. Wife
- C. Parents
- D. Children
- E. In-laws

III. Financial Woes

- A. Current distress
- B. Responsibility of Family and Church

IV. Physical Health

- A. Prolonged sickness will get even the best of us down.
- B. Loss of ability to worship / Bible study time / family time / burdensome / work / recreation /

Conclusion:

The apostle Peter writes, "*cast all your anxiety upon him because he cares for you*" (I Peter 5:7). It is comforting and encouraging to know that our Lord cares for us as individuals. Knowing that the Lord does care about my sorrows and heartaches helps me to say as Paul, "I can do all things through him who strengthens me" (Phil. 4:13).