

# The Battleship and the Lighthouse

In the darkest part of the night, a ship's captain cautiously piloted his warship through the fog-shrouded waters. With straining eyes he scanned the hazy darkness, searching for dangers lurking just out of sight. His worst fears were realized when he saw a bright light straight ahead. It appeared to be a vessel on a collision course with his ship. To avert disaster, he quickly radioed the oncoming vessel. "This is Captain Jeremiah Smith," his voice crackled over the radio. "Please alter your course ten degrees south! Over."

To the captain's amazement, the foggy image did not move. Instead, he heard back on the radio, "Captain Smith, this is Private Thomas Johnson. Please alter your course ten degrees north! Over."

Appalled at the audacity of the message, the captain shouted back over the radio, "Private Johnson, this is Captain Smith, and I order you to immediately alter your course ten degrees south! Over."

A second time the oncoming light did not budge. "With all due respect, Captain Smith," came the private's voice again, "I order you to alter your course immediately ten

Author Unknown

degrees north! Over."

Angered and frustrated that this impudent sailor would endanger the lives of his men and crew, the captain growled back over the radio. "Private Johnson, I can have you court-martialed for this! For the last time, I command you on the authority of the United States government to alter your course ten degrees to the south! I am a battleship!"

The private's final transmission was chilling--"Captain Smith, sir. Once again with all due respect, I command you to alter your course ten degrees to the north! I am a lighthouse!"

Many today have little respect for authority. Some operate as if rules can be changed to fit their personal needs and desires. Commercialism egg us on: "Have it your way." In reality, we can't always have it our way. We have to conform our lives to a higher truth, a higher authority. Truth is not going to change to accommodate us. We are the ones who must change to conform our lives to what is true.



### Gospel Meetings this Week

**Carlos Flores—Spanish Church** Lagrange, GA with Greg Gwin  
**Sun. 9:30 AM, 7 PM, M-W 7 PM** Sunday through Friday

### Sick

Fran Snyder (Mother of Carla Humphrey)	Pam Dial (Laura Weldon's Mother)
Gloria Detmer and Carol Dickerson (Toni Herd's Sisters)	Ruby Johnson (Erica Seymore's Grandmother)
Ross Folmar	Dave and Betty Bradford
Ed Mort (Friend of Sharon Bailey)	"Grandmama" Odessa Wyatt (Dyle's grandmother)
Gerald White (Christopher's and Wesley's Father)	Dave Brown (Friend of the Lanier's)
Marty and Aubrey Meeks (Toni Herd's Nephews)	Carrie Chavers (Friend of Sharon Bailey)
Johnny Adrian (Friend of Sullivan's)	Lori Holloway
Chick Wade	Jared Nixon

### June Birthdays

- 3—Phillip Stephens
- 9—Alex Thompson
- 9—Kay White
- 11—Hannah Alexander
- 12 - Riley Jones
- 12—Ashley—Baker
- 13—Marcus Harrell
- 14—Phillip Bailey
- 17—Sarah Norman
- 17—Brooks Pender
- 17—Wesley White
- 22—Paul Tam
- 22—Seth Buchanan
- 25—Corey Hunt
- 28—Craig Davis
- 28—Clint Davis
- 28—Allison Chandler
- 29—Josh Hudson

### News and Notes

- Let's remember our expectant mothers: Laura Weldon, Anna Miller, Nicole Pender, Joy Liu and Amanda Stephens.
- Here is the Delk's new address after their move: 23139 Tranquil Springs Lane Katy, TX 77494 Adam's New Cell: (281) 740-8897
- Congratulations to Jared and Sharon Ramsey and Craig and Paula Davis in their marriages yesterday!
- Here is the address for Craig and Paula: 2074 Felicity Lane Auburn, AL 36830
- Mike Morrow's mother died last week. For the next month his address is: 243 Toney Ave; Russellville, AL 35653 — His email is: mike.morrow@enc.cz

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# The Auburn Beacon



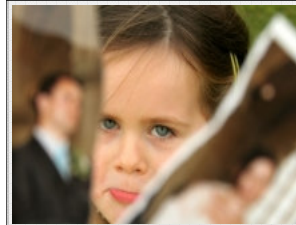
Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven. **(Matthew 5:16)**

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## Does Baptism Wash Away Past Unlawful Marriages?

By H. E. Phillips



### Thought to Ponder

So many persons who think divorce a panacea for every ill find out when they try it that the remedy is worse than the disease .

"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 divorce and remarriage 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; Mk. 10:11, 12; Lk. 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

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**Do You Have a Bible Question?**  
 Call (334) 734-2133 or  
 E-mail:  
 LarryRouse@aubeacon.com

### SCHEDULE OF SERVICES Sunday

Bible Class .....9:30 AM  
 Worship .....10:20 AM  
 Evening Worship ..... 6:00 PM

### Wednesday

Bible Classes.....7:00 PM

Ask about our home Bible Study Groups!

Larry Rouse  
 Evangelist and Editor

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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; Lk. 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**).

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 Phillip's wife, "It is not lawful for thee to have thy brother's wife" (**Mk. 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 further down this road one goes, the more unbelievable it becomes. Baptism will 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 Jn. 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.

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# The Eternal Value of not Giving Up

By Tom Edwards

There are probably many reasons--though unjustifiable--why some people do not want to obey the Lord. For instance, sometimes it is because of peer pressure or the threat of social ostracism (**John 12:42, 43**) or perhaps--as in the case of the early church--the fear of torture or death could also serve as an overwhelming deterrent. To comfort those who would face the latter, Jesus says, "And do not fear those who kill the body, but are unable to kill the soul; but rather fear Him who is able to destroy both soul and body in hell" (**Matt. 10:28**). Also in **Revelation 2:10**, the promise of an everlasting life is given to those who would remain true to God during their endurance of much tribulation: "Do not fear what you are about to suffer. Behold, the devil is about to cast some of you into prison, that you may be tested, and you will have tribulation ten days. Be faithful until death, and I will give you the crown of life" (**Rev. 2:10**).

Also in **Luke 21:19**, this same reoccurring thought is exclaimed: "By your endurance you will gain your lives." Again and again, we are made aware of the need for the Christian to persevere in his faith and obedience; but just how important is this? God, through the writer of the book of Hebrews, clearly shows of this by warning, "For you have need of endurance, so that when you have done the will of God, you may receive what was promised...But My righteous one shall live by faith; and if he shrinks back, My soul has no pleas-

Whatever your lot in life will be, your perseverance in Christ can help you through, fill your life with purpose, and lead you to a blissful eternity that will make you forever glad that you did not give up.

ure in him. But we are not of those who shrink back to destruction, but of those who have faith to the preserving of the soul" (**Heb. 10:36, 38 39**).

Eternal salvation is contingent upon our perseverance in living for God (**Rom. 2:7, 8**). To "shrink back" can only lead to destruction. We must, therefore, "contend earnestly for the faith" (**Jude 3**) and not

stray from it--for that would result in eternal ruin (**James 5:19, 20**).

There is great reward for the one who will remain true and faithful to the Lord Jesus. In speaking to His apostles, the Lord encouraged them with the following challenge: "And you will be hated by all on account of My name, but it is the one who has endured to the end who will be saved" (**Matt. 10:22**).

Will you be one who will also endure to the end? If you are not a Christian, we would like to help you become one. And if you are a Christian who has ceased enduring for the cause of Christ, we would like to encourage you to pick up your cross again and follow after Jesus. Do so now, while you have the time. Tomorrow might be too late. Now is the time for each of us to live faithfully and endure whatsoever may befall us for the gospel's sake. Whatever your lot in life will be, your perseverance in Christ can help you through, fill your life with purpose, and lead you to a blissful eternity that will make you forever glad that you did not give up.

