

“Be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord...” - 1 Cor 15:58

NORTHSIDE EXHORTER

A Teaching Bulletin to Inform & Edify God's Family at Northside

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March 10, 2019

“Water Baptism: From Heaven Or From Men?”

Religiously speaking, many still struggle with the subject of water baptism. Is it a command? Is it a work? Is it essential for salvation or is it essential for discipleship? Yet, recently, I was confronted with a “new” question. Water baptism: Is it from heaven or is it from man? This seems like a strange question considering that all the previous questions assume that baptism is ordained by heaven. However, it can no longer be assumed that religious people & brethren understand this.

In *Matthew 21:23-27*, the authority of Jesus was challenged. The chief priests & the elders wanted to know, “***By what authority was Jesus doing these things & who gave Jesus this authority?***” Kudos to the chief priests & elders for understanding two things about authority:

1. We must have authority for the things we do.
2. Our authority must come from the proper source.

In this conversation, Jesus gives us a third rule of authority by identifying the two possible sources: from heaven or from man. This conversation is very close to being the identical conversation we must have with all when it comes to the things people do, believe, & teach in religion. This is the standard we will use to answer the question regarding the authority for water baptism: is it from heaven or from men?

Is There Authority For Water Baptism?

Yes. *Colossians 3:17* teaches that we must have authority for all we say & do. We teach that this must

be done because it is essential to one's salvation (*1 Peter 3:20-21*).

Do We Have A Source Of Authority For Water Baptism?

Yes. Jesus authorized His apostles to baptize (*Matthew 28:19*). The apostle Peter taught that it was commanded & water is the substance (*Acts 10:47-48*).

Is Water Baptism From Heaven Or From Men?

In other words, did the authority to baptize anyone in water come from God or is this a tradition from man? It is from Heaven. The Father showed His approval when Jesus was baptized (*Matthew 3:13-17*). Jesus teaches that the Holy Spirit & water are both involved when one is born again (*John 3:5*), for entrance into Christ's kingdom is granted by such obedience.

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