

“Baptize Me, John” Matthew 3:7-17

And the reason religion must be condemned is because Jesus Christ is going to be baptized and baptism is a ritual and we must understand the true nature of religion before we get into the ritual of our Lord’s baptism, so that we’ll NEVER identify this ritual with religion.

The Pharisees hated the Lord Jesus although He just wanted them to come to their senses and take responsibility for their own thoughts, motivations and actions.

An unrealistic self-image makes a hero from a false estimation of self and this phony self-respect becomes the basis for disorientation in life: in relationship to God, in relationship to self and in relationship to others and that’s why John refers to the religious leaders as venomous snakes.

Faith alone in Christ alone is the Second Birth experience and these religious leaders are banking on the fact that they were born Jews but it’s clear that they have not become born-again Jews.

What made Abraham a Jew was not that he was circumcised but that he was born again; his circumcision like water baptism followed his conversion as an outward sign of its occurrence.

God will not under any circumstances, accept human good works.

Ritual was a proper way of teaching the Lord Jesus Christ and His salvation in the Old Testament but by this time in the 4th cycle of divine discipline, we have a terrible apostasy going on.

John directs people toward him in the water and he puts them under it, baptizing or identifying them with the water which represents the Kingdom of God, setting a precedent for an entirely new order.

John lived in the day when the transition was beginning and he had only ONE authorized ritual in his entire ministry and that was water baptism.

So, all of the ritual that’s left to us today is the mandatory Lord’s Communion Table and optional water baptism and the reason is that the ever-powerful back of ritual must be broken.

Actual salvation occurs at the very second that we believe in Jesus Christ and immediately before that, we repented which means that we changed our minds about Him and what He has done for us.

All unification of believers is based on the fact that we have the same Lord and were all saved exactly the same way when we entered into union with Jesus Christ by the work of the Baptism of the Spirit.

The Baptism of Fire is one of judgement, just as the Baptism of the Spirit is one of blessing.

The Baptism of Fire points out the principle that those who believe in Jesus Christ are in a place of eternal blessing and those who reject Him are in a place of identification with fire.

The Baptism of Jesus is where He declares that He will voluntarily go to the Cross and die for the sins of the world so, this is the unique baptism of all water baptisms and therefore, no one ever follows Him in baptism.

The Baptism of Jesus Christ begins His public ministry.

We cannot have a Kingdom of born-again members of the human race living forever unless we have a bona fide eternal King and we cannot have the King’s reign on earth before the Cross; the Cross must come before the crown!

All righteousness is fulfilled at the Cross.

The Holy Spirit empowered the humanity of Christ during His earthly ministry and not only did He sustain Him but He gave Him the power to perform signs, wonders and miracles.

God the Father is completely satisfied with His precious Son and He derived such pleasure in the humanity of Christ when He agreed to go to the Cross and provide eternal salvation for us all!