

Thursday, July 22, 2021 – Does Baptism Sanctify an Adulterous Relationship?

John Hobbs is a false teacher. Not surprisingly, this did not keep the Wylie church of Christ “elders” from allowing him to teach and preach this past Sunday. Hobbs may teach some doctrinally sound things, but he is wrong on divorce and remarriage which then requires Christian to deal with him as directed in Ephesians 5:11, Titus 3:10, Titus 1:13, etc.

Sadly, as I write this article, there are at least 8 different false doctrines taught regarding the subject of marriage, divorce and remarriage. We have studied this subject often in these pages but I want to focus today on one of these doctrines that is truly irrational and, for anyone who studies the bible with the seriousness of wanting to know the truth on a given subject as opposed to trying to make it say what you want it to, easily defeated through scripture.

The false doctrine we shall study lays out as follows:

1. John and Mary are married. Neither John nor Mary is a Christian.
2. John divorces Mary for some cause other than fornication.
3. John then marries Sally. Neither John nor Sally is a Christian.
4. John and Sally becomes Christians.
5. John, reading Matt. 5:32 and Matt. 19:9, becomes deeply concerned about his present marriage. Is he living in an adulterous relationship or not? Must he and Sally end their relationship?
6. The false doctrine we are studying today states that John and Sally are NOT living in an adulterous relationship and their marriage has been sanctified through their baptism.

Please name for me ANY action that is sinful prior to baptism which then becomes sanctified after baptism? Is homosexuality a sin? Does baptism make homosexuality sanctified? Is murder a sin? Does baptism now sanctify murder?

I must start this lesson with a simple question: Are All Men Answerable to the Law of Christ? If one segment of mankind is NOT answerable to the Law of Christ, what will judge them in the last day (John 12:48)? Did Christ include non-Christians in Matthew 5:32 and Matthew 19:9?

There are men teaching that only Christians are answerable to all the law of Christ. The non-Christian is not subject to Christ’s law, they are subject to some other law (law on the heart, moral law, or civil law). However, let us notice some teachings proving that all men are answerable to the Law of Christ.

- 1) WHATEVER MEN ARE NOT ANSWERABLE TO CHRIST'S LAW DO NOT COMMIT SIN.
 - a) Sin is transgression of the Law.
 - i) 1 John 3:4 "Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."
 - b) If they are not under the Law of Christ then they do not sin.
 - i) Rom. 3:19 "Now we know that what things soever the law saith, it saith to them who are under the law: that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God."
 - ii) Rom. 4:15 "Because the law worketh wrath: for where no law is, there is no transgression."
 - c) Yet, all men have sinned, thus all men are under the Law of Christ.
 - i) Rom. 3:23 "For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God"
 - ii) Gal. 3:22 "But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe."
 - d) Since all men sin, all are answerable to the Law of Christ!
- 2) IF ONE IS SUBJECT TO ANY PART OF A LAW HE IS SUBJECT TO ALL THE LAW.
 - a) Gal. 5:3 "For I testify again to every man that is circumcised, that he is a debtor to do the whole law."
 - b) Jam. 2:10 "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all."
 - c) All men have been given the command to repent and be baptized, thus all men are subject to all the law of God.
 - i) Acts 17:30 "And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:"
 - ii) Acts 2:38 "Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."
- 3) A WORLD-WIDE COMMISSION PROVES THAT ALL MEN ARE ANSWERABLE TO CHRIST'S LAW.
 - a) Mat. 28:19-20 "Go ye therefore, and teach **all nations**, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."
 - b) Mark 16:15-16 "And he said unto them, Go ye **into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature**. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."
 - c) Luke 24:46-47 "And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47And that repentance and remission of sins should be **preached in his name among all nations**, beginning at Jerusalem."
 - d) Acts 1:8 "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Why are all men answerable to the Law of Christ? Because of the nature of Christ! He is the one with ALL AUTHORITY!

- Heb. 2:8 "Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him."
- Mat. 28:18 "And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto

me in heaven and in earth."

Christ's authority is over ALL MEN, whether or not they submit to Him!

How does this relate to the subject at hand?

In Acts 2, Peter charged the Jews in his audience with killing the Christ: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:35). They were cut to the heart by the charge and asked what they needed to do. Peter's answer was "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38). Following further teaching, 3,000 people were baptized that day. "Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them" (Acts 2:40).

Now, I want you to notice that these people were saved, so they both were baptized and had repented. Yet, there was no demand of proof that they would not kill the Christ again, or perhaps not kill one of God's prophets. Repentance was shown because these people changed their ways. That a proof of a change had not been demonstrated in their lives at the point of their baptism doesn't matter. A change was required and their baptism into Christ showed their acceptance.

If I was teaching a person about the sin of fornication and he declared that he was going to stop having sex until he was married and he asked to be baptized, I would joyfully do so. The problem I've been seeing is that some, knowing they are in sin are either not told about the sin or they are baptized first with plans to address the sin later. Such doesn't follow the example Peter set forth in Acts 2. A person who is stealing should not have the expectation that they can continue to steal after being a Christian. A person in an adulterous relationship should not expect to stay in adultery after baptism. Becoming a Christian is about conversion, not getting a person wet.

There may be sins that the new Christian commits but is unaware it is sinful and which the one leading him to Christ is also unaware of. Eventually, as a Christian grows he will learn of his mistakes and the proper response to make a correction in life so as not to continue in sin. "What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?" (Romans 6:1-2). And just because a person is a Christian, it doesn't mean he won't be tempted with new sins either. We are at war with Satan, and it is a constant battle. "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (I John 1:8-9). God doesn't say we have to be baptized again. He gives us a means to gain forgiveness of the sins we commit after we have become His children through baptism.

The key to this whole discussion is repentance. Consider the following:

What the Bible says Repentance consists of:

1. There are two words used in the New Testament for repent or repentance and it is important we understand the difference.
 - 1.1. One is the word *met-am-el'-lom-ahee* , used six times in the New Testament as a verb. It means to have a thought of remorse or regret
 - 1.1.1. Ex. **Mt 27:3** - Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, he repented, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders.
 - 1.1.1.1. Judas regretted his sin, but did not genuinely repent
 - 1.1.2. **2 Cor. 7:8** - For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent (regret), though I did repent (regret) for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.
 - 1.1.2.1. Paul doesn't regret sending them the letter because he knows they needed it sent to them, but he regretted having to send it to them.
 - 1.2. The other word is *met-an-o-eh'-o*, used some 34 times in the verb form and 24 in the noun form.
 - 1.2.1. This is the word used in the New Testament to note genuine repentance, indicating that the sinner must make "a spiritual change." It is almost always (only one exception, I believe) used in reference to repentance from sin. In this word there is a "change of mind" and it results in a "change of conduct."
 - 1.2.2. **Acts 2:38** - **Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins
 - 1.2.3. **Acts 26:20** - but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should **repent**, turn to God, and do works befitting **repentance**.
 - 1.2.4. The word repentance here comes from the word repent in the same verse. This is what Godly repentance demands.
 - 1.3. **2 Corinthians 7:8-10** - For even if I made you sorry with my letter, I do not **regret it (repent)**; though I did **regret it (repent)**. For I perceive that the same epistle made you sorry, though only for a while. Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to **repentance**. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For **godly sorrow produces repentance** leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death.
 - 1.3.1. What kind of sorrow? Not worldly sorrow, it produces death
 - 1.3.1.1. "Worldly sorrow" is a SELFISH kind of sorrow
 - 1.3.1.2. E.g., when one is sorry because HE got caught
 - 1.3.1.3. E.g., when one is sorry because what one did made HIM look bad

1.3.1.4. In "worldly sorrow", one is more concerned about SELF!

2. **We can know genuine (true) repentance**

- 2.1. Goebel Music said, "If I were to give one single thought, one basic sentence, in my explanation of what repentance is, it would be this: "Repentance is a change of mind, brought about or produced by godly sorrow, that results in a change of life."
- 2.2. **Regret** -- the sinner must feel regret, as he now understands his sins have transgressed God's law and he has incurred God's wrath (cf. 2 Cor. 7:10).
- 2.3. **Resolve** -- from verses such as Matt. 21:29 and Luke 15:18, we know the sinner must change his will.
- 2.4. **Reform** -- this change of conduct is seen in the life that he now lives, that is, the fruit thereof is ever so clear (cf. Matt. 3:8; 1 Thess. 1:9; Acts 19:19).
- 2.5. **Restore** -- this is most difficult, perhaps at times impossible (the one I have sinned against may be dead), but the desire and effort are absolutes. If I have stolen something, I must return it -- this is the idea herein expressed.

3. Godly sorrow produces repentance

3.1. I.e., one is sorry because their actions are sins against a Holy God...read Psalms 51

3.1.1. **Psalms 51:4 - Against You, You only, have I sinned, And done this evil in Your sight-That You may be found just when You speak, And blameless when You judge**

3.2. One is sorry for the price GOD must pay to have our sins removed

3.2.1. What was that price?

3.2.2. Christ death on the cross

3.3. In "godly sorrow", one is more concerned with GOD than self!

3.4. One must come to a point of viewing sin as a disgusting thing to participate in or do. This is how God views sin.

3.5. Remember repent is a change of mind

4. Genuine Repentance leads to a change of conduct or reformation of Life

4.1. Some change of life can come upon someone without repentance.

4.1.1. Murder, thief, liar, cheater etc

4.1.2. This means you cease sinful practices (fornication, drunkenness, lying etc.)

4.1.2.1. Paul, in **1 Cor. 6:9-11** mentions those who **WERE** (past tense) living in sin - **Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.**

And such were some of you. But you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus and by the Spirit of our God.

4.1.2.2. Does anyone seriously believe for one moment that they continued in those sins after baptism with God's approval?

4.1.3. This means you get out of sinful relationships

4.1.3.1. This means marriages that are **NOT** authorized by God

4.1.3.2. We can easily see and agree that a person who steals a car, watch or money makes restitution, to the best of their abilities, to truly repent.

4.1.3.3. Why can't we see that the same applies in unscriptural marriages?

4.1.3.4. Some suggest that baptism washes away their former adulterous relationship and allows them to continue together after baptism

4.1.3.5. Some questions need to be asked of those who feel baptism or prayer (if one is already a Christian) makes an adulterous marriage holy

4.1.3.5.1. Could a polygamist continue with five wives after baptism or prayer with God's approval

4.1.3.5.2. Could an idolater continue in idolatry after baptism or prayer with God's approval

4.1.3.5.3. Could homosexuals continue in "marriage" after baptism or prayer with God's approval?

4.1.3.6. Can anyone honestly suggest that baptism or prayer (if already a Christian) sanctions as holy that which prior to baptism or prayer was unholy? Can anyone name one thing that is sinful before baptism, but which after baptism is not sinful?

4.1.3.7. Baptism or prayer is not some kind of magic that performs marriage ceremonies for adulterers.

4.1.4. Even true repentance requires us to suffer the earthly consequences of our sin, but it brings us back into the right state with God.

4.1.4.1. Jail time, celibacy

4.1.4.2. We still have to abide God's commands

4.2. We must answer the question "Why are we here? Earthly satisfaction and happiness or to live a Christ centered life so that I can reach heaven."

4.3. Genuine repentance (as enjoined in the gospel of Christ), when coupled with knowledge of the will of God, always results in the correct reformation of life.

5. Repentance requires restitution.

- 5.1. People constantly ask if "repentance" results in restitution. Let us observe the following:
- 5.2. In the Old Testament God required that recompense be made to the injured party, and a fifth part added to it, etc. (Note: **Leviticus 6:1-7**)
- 5.3. Christ approved of what Zacchaeus said in **Luke 19:3-9**
- 5.4. Restitution, where possible, is certainly involved in the Biblical doctrine of repentance

The command of repentance is aimed directly at the will of man, and herein lies the difficulty. It is hard to get man to give up sin, as "self" is the hardest man in the world to crucify (cf. Matt. 19:16-22; Acts 8:13ff; 17:32-34). Very few can say with Paul, "I have been crucified with Christ; and it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me: and that life which I now live in the flesh I live in faith, the faith which is in the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself up for me" (Gal. 2:20).

Our Lord Himself taught that we must "deny" self. "If any man would come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross ..." (Matt. 16:24)

The Lord knew man (cf. John 2:24-25) and knew that he was quick to justify self and avoid guilt. Man must get rid of self. He must crucify self, as "no man can serve two masters" (cf. Matt. 6:24). If self is enthroned, then Christ is dethroned! Indeed, the command to repent, when fully obeyed, dethrones self and enthrones Christ as his ruler. This is a real challenge to self.

Satan's trying to undermine what you know with seeds of doubt. If you let those take root, it will destroy your faith.

Unfortunately, a man who teaches this damning heresy was allowed, with open arms by an eldership that was warned about him, to lead the devotional of a meeting of the Lord's church.

Why? My guess is the fact he came to the Wylie eldership bearing a gift of property from the congregation he preached for since 2008 that he couldn't help through evangelizing to grow. They finally decided to shut down after averaging a Sunday morning attendance of around 12.