

# The Oak Grove Oracle

(Family News & Views of the Oak Grove Church of Christ)

Meeting Weekly At Our Building Located At:

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## Erasing All Doubt (#2)

There is an old truism which I think makes good sense in relation to the spiritual doubts which at times plague our minds. "There is a way which is right which cannot be wrong." In other words there is a way to please God which is sure and certain. It's as simple as - do all God said to do, in the way God said to do it, and do it with the right attitude, or for the right reason. Surely we can understand the Bible enough to do what God said for us to do. It makes no sense whatsoever to think He let His Son die to pay for our sins and to provide for our salvation, but then made the process too difficult for us to understand.

Nevertheless, because we are humans we may often have questions and doubts about our standing with God. For instance some people who, "grew up in the church," and were baptized at a very young age, later in life come to question whether they really understood enough about what they were doing for their baptism to be valid and effective in washing away their past sins (Acts 22:16). Others have questions and doubts about their "conversion experience," in which they participated in earlier years at denominational churches which clearly do not teach the Gospel plan of salvation. In both cases, these individuals show an earnest desire to make sure they are right with God, and to comply with all His terms of pardon. Their concern is commendable, for all of us are commanded to "make our calling and election sure," and to "work out our own salvation with fear and trembling," as noted in Philippians 2:12 and 2 Peter 1:10.

The question always emerges in such cases, "Can a person be taught wrong, or believe wrong, and yet be baptized right?" Certainly forgiveness of sins takes place in the mind of God. Only God and the individual know what that individual was thinking when they were "baptized," concerning why they were being baptized and what was achieved in that act. The Bible says God will judge that action based upon what the Scriptures teach (John 12:48-50). Also, we must conclude from Acts 19:1-7, there is such a thing as an "invalid baptism," if a person has been improperly instructed, or has a faulty understanding of baptism "in the name Christ."

That said, the Bible makes it clear that any individual who was "sprinkled" or "poured" has not been "Scripturally baptized," because baptism, by definition, is an "immersion" or "burial" in water (Rms. 6:4, & Col. 2:12). Also, no one who was baptized as an infant has been Scripturally baptized, because the Bible teaches that only hearing, believing, penitent, individuals, who willingly confess Jesus Christ as Lord (Romans 10:17, John 8:24, Luke 13:3, Matthew 10:32), are proper candidates for baptism. Since no infant can hear, believe, repent, or confess Christ, it follows that "infant baptism" is not Scriptural. It also follows that any adult, even if "immersed" in water, has not been **Scripturally baptized** if they did not properly believe, repent, and confess the Lord before they were baptized.

(to be continued next week)