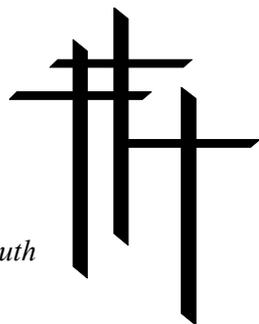


# Timely Messenger



*Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth  
Speaking the Truth in Love*

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## THE BAPTISM OF A SAGE

by Randy Arendell

**M**y oldest daughter, Dakota, believes in Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death. She also understands why His death was needed for her to be forgiven of her sins, and she has accepted Him as her Savior based on an understanding that He died and rose from the dead. I know she believes these things, because as her mother and I would teach her and ask if she believed what we said, she honestly told us early on that she did not know if she believed or not. Though we really wanted to hear her say, “Yes,” we very much appreciated her honesty. For that reason, when she finally told us that she did, indeed, believe, we knew it was not a flippant decision and that it was genuine.

Some churches teach that

water baptism would be required for her to be saved. Others, like our church, believe that it is not required but that it is a step of obedience that should follow one’s decision to trust in Christ. So Dakota has occasionally been witness to the baptismal services that are held at our church. And a number of her friends or peers have been among those who have made that so-called “public profession of faith” by getting baptized. As a result, she wanted to get baptized, too.

The first time she brought it up, she readily admitted that the reason was because she had seen her friends do the same. My response would be that that was an inappropriate reason, after which I attempted to explain the biblical purpose of baptism. After having the same type of exchange a couple of more times, she started to figure out that she would not get any-

where by using that reason. So the new reason became, *“I believe in Jesus and that’s the right thing to do.”* Which soon morphed into, *“Baptism is a way for me to let others know I believe.”*

I do not believe that baptism is a requirement for salvation. I also do not believe that water baptism is even a required step of obedience for a member of the Body of Christ. In fact, the Bible shows it as being a component of the Mosaic Law, and we in the body of Christ are not under the Law (Rom. 6:14). Baptism was, specifically, a requirement for the priesthood (Exo. 29:4; 40:12; Lev. 8:5-6; 16:3-4; Num. 8:5-7; Heb. 9:9-10). A priest would be washed (baptized) as part of his consecration process. Because God told Israel that they would be a kingdom of priests (Ex. 19:5-6), then as the time approached for God to pour out His judgment on the nation during “Jacob’s Trial” (Jer. 30:7), or the Great Tribulation—a period of purging where the wicked would be cut off from the nation and after which the righteous would enter into the prophesied kingdom—then God sent Jesus in Person to seek the lost sheep of the house of Israel, to command repentance from them in conjunction

with the keeping of the Mosaic Law, and to prepare them for those end days. But before Jesus began His ministry, John the Baptist came preaching, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand” (Matt. 3:2). And he baptized in water those who believed him, calling it a “baptism with water unto repentance” (Matt. 3:11). So individual Israelites were being baptized in accordance with the law of the priesthood so that they could be consecrated into that national priesthood.

In accordance with that same law, Peter commanded repentance and baptism following Pentecost as he and the other Eleven continued to prepare Israel for the kingdom. This was required of them, considering what Jesus had recently commissioned them with in the well-known “Great Commission” passage of Matthew 28:19-20.

There is much more to talk about on the subject, but picture a six-year old telling her Daddy that she wants to be baptized, followed by him launching into a study of the Mosaic Law with her, detailing the various requirements set forth in it. Needless to say, it was fruitless for both of us. In fact, she literally begged me to stop the last time

I attempted to explain the subject to her in the car on the way to Tae Kwon Do class. She was frustrated. And to be truthful, I was, too. Why couldn't a six-year old understand the finer points of the law of the consecration of priests?

Then it dawned on me. Dakota is very visual; she learns best when the education is hands on and fun. So when we got home and settled in, I called her to me and said, "Let's talk about baptism some more." "Awww, Daaaaad. Not again." But I convinced her to hear me out. And what happened next was one of the most amazing things I have ever experienced. After that night, Dakota Sage never asked me to be baptized again.

On a piece of paper, I drew the following:



...to represent Jesus. Crude, I know, but it would prove to be effective.

I then asked Dakota to tell me some things she knew about Jesus and to write those things down next to His picture. She started with a few, and we worked together to come up with the following:

*(Continued on page 4)*

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*Gregg Bing — Editor*

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*Thanks for your help  
in this matter!*

(Continued from page 3)



<i>Crucified</i>	<i>Resurrected</i>
<i>Son of God</i>	<i>Glorious</i>
<i>Holy</i>	<i>Sinless</i>
<i>Perfect</i>	

Putting that piece of paper to the side for a few moments, I then asked her: *“Did you know that in the Bible, there are a lot of different kinds of baptism?”*

*“What do you mean?”*

*“Well, I’ve told you that priests had to be baptized in water. So there’s one. Other people would be washed or baptized as a ritual cleansing if they touched something dead, for instance (Lev. 17:15-16). Even though we’re not under the law, the next time you touch a dead goat I’m going to baptize you, too ... just so you’ll know.”* Can’t be too serious and risk losing her again. *“Anyway, baptism is just a word that means immersed in something ... completely surrounded by something, or something like that. So it doesn’t have to be water. Paul talks about the Israelites being baptized into Moses (1 Cor. 10:2). How can someone be baptized into a person, instead of water? Do you slice him open and crawl inside?”*

With a puzzled look, she said, *“I don’t know.”*

*“What Paul meant by that was that they were surrounded—completely immersed—into the Law which was delivered by Moses. Everywhere they went and everything they did, they were constantly reminded about the Law and its requirements. So they were immersed—baptized—into Moses whose main function was chief administrator of the Law. They were to completely take on that which Moses delivered to them. Does that make sense?”*

*“Yessir.”*

We were doing good. *“Paul also talks about a baptism into Christ. Based on what I just said about Moses, what do you think it means to be baptized into Christ?”*

*“I’m not sure what you mean.”*

*“The answer is right here on this piece off paper. But first, let me read something to you. ‘There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all’ (Eph. 4.4-6). How many baptisms does Paul say there are?”*

*“He said ‘One’.”*

*“How many baptisms have we talked about that there are*

in the Bible?"

"Three or four."

"So if Paul says there is only one, then all of those different kinds of baptisms can't be what he's talking about. So which one is he talking about?"

"I don't know."

So I read:

"Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?" (Rom. 6:3)

"For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Gal. 3:27)

"...buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead." (Col. 2:12)

"Now, which 'one baptism' is Paul talking about?"

"Baptism into Christ."

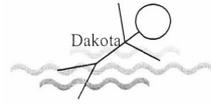
"You nailed it. Now let's look at the picture." And I drew the following:



"What's that look like?"

"Kinda like water."

"Right. And here's you going into the water."



"When you come back out of the water, what's your body like?"

"You're wet."

"Why?"

"Because water is wet."

"Beautiful! So if you get wet when you go under water because water is wet, what happens when you get baptized into Christ?" And I wrote her name inside the picture of Jesus' body, giving us the following:



Crucified Resurrected  
Son of God Glorious  
Holy Sinless  
Perfect

Still a little puzzled but starting to see where I was heading, she honestly said, "I'm still not totally sure what you mean."

"If you get wet when you get baptized in water because water is wet, then when you are baptized into Jesus, something happens to you because of what He is. Look at the picture and tell me what you become?"

Silence, a quizzical look as she stared at the picture ... then the light flared to life. Her face

lit up and she said, “Am I those same things He is?”

Glory Hallelujah! She was on to something. “You got it. Just like you get wet when you are baptized in water—because water is wet—you also take on those things that Jesus is when you get baptized into Him. So that means it’s as if you were crucified, too. Not that you were actually killed. But when you believed in Him and entered into His Body, the old sinful part of you died. What else?”

“Resurrected?”

“Yep. Because He rose from the dead, you were also raised, so to speak, to a new life after your old one died. And it means you’ll get to rise to heaven one day, like He did, and live with Him forever. What else?”

“I’m a Son of God, too!”

No more questions. Now just excited answers.

“You got it. The Bible says you were adopted as God’s child” (Eph. 1:5). Don’t stop now!”

“I’m PERFECT!”

“How cool is that!?! Because He is perfect, then that means you are, too. It doesn’t mean you do everything perfectly and never sin. But His perfection hides your imperfection. So God looks at you and

sees His perfect Son. He treats you as if you’re perfect, meaning that you can live with Him forever in a place where only perfect people are allowed. You couldn’t be perfect on your own, so He did it for you. So here’s a big question. Would you rather be wet or perfect?”

“Definitely PERFECT! Guess what Dad?!!!” Now shes’ taking over the conversation. I’m pumped up. “So I’m in here...,” pointing with her marker ...



Crucified	Resurrected
Son of God	Glorious
Holy	Sinless
Perfect	

“... but there are a lot of others out here ...”



Crucified	Resurrected
Son of God	Glorious
Holy	Sinless
Perfect	

“So I need to tell them about Jesus so they can come in with me ...”



Crucified	Resurrected
Son of God	Glorious
Holy	Sinless
Perfect	

“... and be perfect, too!!!”

We continued to doodle and have lots of fun that night. She got it and was totally excited to have gotten it. Occasionally I'll ask her what it means to be baptized into Christ. Her reply ...

*"I'm PERFECT, just like Him!"*

God requires perfection from His people. And only by being perfect can we live eternally with Him in heaven. But it is impossible for us to have never sinned, not even once, in our lives. We can try hard, but it will never happen. But by believing in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection and by placing our trust in Him as the One Who can save us from eternal separation from God, then we enter into His Body and take on His perfection. Dakota Sage clearly knows that she, as a person, is not actually perfect here on earth. So her declaration that, *"I'm perfect,"* is by no means an arrogant one. Rather, it is an acknowledgement from a very wise young girl that she HAS BEEN MADE perfect by the blood of her Savior. God takes joy in her and approves of her because she has taken on the attributes of His holy, blameless, crucified and resurrected, perfect Son, Jesus Christ.

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*Randy Arendell became a Christian while attending college and has since served the Lord in numerous leadership, teaching, and other service capacities. His primary love and calling is teaching the Bible.*

*Randy has a Masters of Business Administration from Northeast Louisiana University and just recently retired from AT&T where he worked for the last eleven years. He and his wife, Lisa, live in north Louisiana where they homeschool their three children.*

*For more information about Randy and his ministry, you may visit his website:*

**[www.truthtrumpstradition.com](http://www.truthtrumpstradition.com)**

**For He made Him who knew  
no sin to be sin for us, that  
we might become the  
righteousness of God  
in Him.**

**2 Corinthians 5:21**

## **“WHEREFORE THEN SERVETH THE LAW?”**

By Ike T. Sidebottom

**T**he law was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made” (Gal. 3:19). Verses 17 and 18 of this same chapter explain that the law was added to the Abrahamic Covenant “four hundred and thirty years” after the confirmation of God’s promise to Abraham, and it continued to the coming of the “Seed,” which was promised to him. It is also clear that the law, which was added, “cannot disannul” the promises of God to Abraham.

The added law covenant was to be in force “till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made.” “Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, and to seeds, as of many; but as of one, and to thy Seed, which is Christ” (vs. 16). This explains why “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God to confirm the promises made unto the fathers” (Rom. 15:8). “All the promises of God in Him are Yea, and in Him Amen, unto the glory of God by us” (2 Cor. 1:20).

The “transgressions” which made the law necessary were taken away by the One who “was numbered with the transgressors” on the cross of Calvary. Thus He became “the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth” (Rom. 10:4).

### **The Limits of the Law**

The law is limited to a specified period of time, which began exactly four hundred and thirty years after the covenant of promise with Abraham and which ended when Christ shed His “blood of the New Testament.” Even though man has marked the Word of God indicating that the Old Testament closes with the last verse of Malachi and that the New Testament opens with the first verse of Matthew, God declares that such is not the case. “For where a testament is, there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. For a testament is of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth” (Heb. 9:16-17). Therefore the New Testament could not come into force until the death of Christ, its Testator; and the Old Testament could not “vanish away” until the New came into force.

We must conclude that the entire life and ministry of Christ, in His first advent, was under the law dispensation, and that His death ended the old covenant and opened the new.

The law is limited to a certain nation. That certain nation is "Israel" whom God bore "on eagle's wings" out of Egyptian bondage. He also delivered to her, through Moses, His proposition concerning the law and the conditions under which Israel could be made a "peculiar treasure," a "kingdom of priests" and "an holy nation." After the children of Israel had heard all the words of God concerning the giving of the law, they all "answered together, and said, All that the Lord hath spoken we will do" (Exo. 19:1-8).

The law is limited to a certain ministration, or service. Its ministration is one of condemnation and death. Paul says, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died. And the commandment, which was ordained to life, I found to be unto death. For sin, taking occasion by the commandment, deceived me and by it slew me. Wherefore the law is holy, and the commandment holy, and just, and good. Was then that which is good made death unto

me? God forbid. But sin, that it might appear sin, worketh death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful" (Rom. 7:9-13). The law slew Paul because it demanded more than he could deliver. For this same reason "as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse" (Gal. 3:10).

### **The Accomplishments of the Law**

With the giving of the law "every mouth" was stopped and all the world became "guilty before God." The mouths of the Gentiles were not stopped by the law but by the threefold testimony of Romans 1:24-28:

- *"God also gave them up to uncleanness." (vs. 24)*
- *"God gave them up unto vile affections." (vs. 26)*
- *"God gave them over to a reprobate mind." (vs. 28)*

The mouths of the house of Israel and of the house of Judah were stopped by the law (Rom. 3:19) because they were the only ones who were under the law. Therefore, after the law was given, both Jews and Gentiles were proved to be "under sin" and neither could open

their mouths in their own defense before God.

The law also serves as “our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith” (Gal. 3:24). This means that the law demands so much that we are forced to turn to a substitute. We look into God’s perfect standard, the law, and we see ourselves far short of the glory of God. We test our flesh under the demands of the law and we find that, even though the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak.

### **“What the Law Could Not Do**

in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending His own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh; that the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the spirit” (Rom. 8:3-4).

Let it be clearly understood that the law which God added is absolutely necessary in the carrying out of His purpose and plan for the ages, yet it has no power, whatsoever, to save or to keep or to perfect the believer. Its usefulness ends when we meet the crucified and risen Christ.

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### **MAN’S WAY OR GOD’S WAY?**

*“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death.” (Prov. 14:12)*

*“Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; let him return to the LORD, and He will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.” (Isa. 55:7)*

*“Jesus said to him, “I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me.” (John 14:6)*

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**S**tudy to shew  
**thyself approved**  
**unto God, a workman**  
**that needeth not to**  
**be ashamed, rightly**  
**dividing the Word**  
**of truth.**

**—2 Timothy 2:15**