

Bread of Life

Vol. IX

March 1960

No. 3



This Issue . . .

THIS ISSUE OF BREAD OF LIFE is devoted entirely to the subject of water baptism. The importance of this rite is briefly but clearly stated on page 12 by the late associate pastor of the Ridgewood Pentecostal Church, Gottfried A. Waldvogel, while some of the unspeakable privileges connected with this ceremony are set forth in the article, "Married to Christ," beginning on page 6, by his brother, Hans R. Waldvogel.

In addition to these scriptural expositions of the doctrine of baptism, we have included a number of testimonies from some who have received specific help in body, soul, or spirit because they obeyed Christ's command, "Be baptized."

In presenting these accounts, however, we would not for a moment wish to give the impression that there is any saving, healing, or spiritual efficacy in the baptismal waters themselves or in the performance of the ceremony itself. No, indeed. But they are excellent examples of what God does when vital faith accompanies the act of obedience. Then one can and should expect a definite manifestation of the promised victory of Christ's resurrection power in delivering the one baptized from the power of sin in body, soul, or spirit and in enabling him to walk in newness of life. Alas, even immersion has often been submitted to and performed as a dead, "spiritless" ceremony instead of a live, Spirit-filled operation of God; but, as in every other part of our experience, wherever there is faith, God is bound to manifest Himself.

"There is much controversy about water baptism in Christianity today," states one of our contributors this month. "On the one hand, the necessity and mode are hotly contended. On the other, we see the whole subject frivolously dismissed:

*'The Baptists go by water;
The Methodists go by land . . .'*

Here the Enemy of our souls has succeeded in deceiving some as to the basic importance of one of the fundamentals of our faith.

"Is it not significant that immediately following the dramatic outpouring of the Spirit as described in the second chapter of Acts and as a culmination to Peter's blatant indictment of his hearers in connection with the murder of the Son of God, God's remedy is given

in two short, straightforward terms: '*Repent and be baptized . . .*'? Three thousand strong, they obeyed the simple admonition and were added to the church. Is God's remedy any different today?

"Baptism certainly was no new custom. It was a feature of the ministry first of John and later of our Lord Himself (John 4:1-2). Nor did baptism end on the Day of Pentecost, but we see it continue in the history of the New Testament church in the ministry of Philip in Samaria and to the eunuch, in Peter's ministry to the household of Cornelius, and in the Apostle Paul's conversion, to mention only a few instances.

"The form of baptism are not in any real question either. There is only one type of baptism recorded in the New Testament. The definition of the word itself specifies submersion. We read of the actual act of baptism only as applied to people who thoroughly grasped its significance and who by their own choice requested it. There have been efforts to explain that type of baptism away. These efforts generally stem from either an incomplete understanding of its significance, or from understanding the consequences far too well to the extent that there is a refusal to submit to the complete authority of God."

"There are reasons why baptism has caused so much controversy," wrote Martha W. Robinson, author of the very helpful, practical comments in "Likewise Reckon Yourselves." "In the study of baptism there is a possibility of reasoning and using of ideas. This is because it has been so much taught. . . . If you could just let *all* your ideas go and just accept the bare Word, you would be greatly interested in what the Bible teaches on this subject. It's a great light to let Scripture just settle profoundly any matter, even willing to be thwarted in your own views if the Bible isn't clearly upholding them."

Finally, a word of exhortation is in order to those who have been baptized already. It is well to meditate much upon this wonderful subject, especially as taught in Romans 6 and Colossians 2 and 3, in order to learn exactly all that God offers us in baptism so that we may appropriate all that has been provided for us.

"God's provision in the gospel and His solemn declaration in baptism call for the appropriation of our faith," says Pastor Gottfried Waldvogel. "As justification must be received by faith even so must sanctifying grace be obtained by believing. It is thus that by the 'exceeding great and precious promises' we are made 'partakers of the divine nature' (2 Peter 1:4)."

Reader, have *you* been buried with Christ by baptism? If so, are you appropriating and enjoying *to the full all the blessings which God has guaranteed to you in this act?* If not, may you receive light and help from the teaching and examples found in this issue of BREAD OF LIFE.

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Raised in Newness of Life

By EDWARD HERGENROTHER

Display Carpenter, Bliss Displays,
New York City

“WHERE will you spend eternity? . . . Where will you spend eternity? . . . Where will you spend ETERNITY?” For six weeks before February 12, 1933, this thought troubled me so much that I could not sleep.

I had been raised as a strict Catholic in Germany, but when I had crossed the ocean to come to America, I dropped the rosary and images the priest had given me into the ocean—and along with all that “stuff” went my religion. For a long time I had not believed the Catholic priests. They preached love to one’s neighbor and to one’s enemy, and then during the war they took the church bells down to make them into cannon and the altar candlesticks into bullets. That didn’t fit together. Common sense told me that. I saw they were faking and wanted nothing to do with them or the church.

During the depression a number of young men, when out of work, used to play cards in the back room of an undertaker in Ridgewood. On a Friday afternoon one of “the boys” announced he was going to church that night. I laughed at him—a man who had gone through the war going to church! I was a rough fellow and had the biggest mouth of the bunch and teased him so much that the other fellows finally said I should leave him alone. A few days later I met this man on the street, and he told me to come home with him as he was taking something to his wife.

At the house his wife testified to me, but I paid no attention to

her. It went in one ear and out the other. Then on the way out she asked me if I would take a promise from the promise box. I did and on it was simply the reference: *Amos 9:11*. Then she got a Bible and we read the verse: “*In that day will I raise up the tabernacle of David that is fallen, and close up the breaches thereof; and I will raise up his ruins, and I will build it as in the days of old.*” I woke up. It was a stroke from heaven. I understood what the Lord was telling there.

Now I had always wanted a Bible. When I was a little boy, there was one Protestant in our town. When he died, we were forbidden by the priest to attend his burial, but we peeked over the wall and I heard the minister repeat the Lord’s Prayer with the words:

For “*Thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever.*” It was the end which struck me. (We Catholics did not say that.) After that I wanted to see what it was all about.

Therefore, when my friend’s wife gave me a New Testament to take home and invited me to her church the next Sunday, I promised to go because she gave me at least a part of the Bible.

On Sunday my wife and I went with my friends to their church, the Ridgewood Pentecostal Church in Brooklyn. (Although my wife was a good Catholic, she had come along for she wanted to see what it was like.) When I entered the hall leading to the church and saw there the picture of Christ

Knocking at the Door, I almost went out. “That’s the same ‘stuff’ as the Catholic Church,” I said to my friends, showing at the same time that I did not want to go in because of the picture. When they said there were no pictures upstairs in the church itself, I consented to go up.

Once I was there, my eyes were wide open in all corners. As I waited for the minister to come in, I said to myself, “If he is dressed like a Catholic priest, I will surely walk out.” That was settled.

When the minister (Brother Hans Waldvogel) came in, he knelt down at his chair. I liked him, for he was dressed like a man—like we were. After he took his chair, he sat there quietly—reverently—for awhile. I liked that. Then he got up and preached on the Lord’s Supper, how we are to eat the Word of God.

Communion had always bothered me in the Catholic Church. I could go to confession—and lie, but I could not take communion. That was holy. Now this minister’s explanation struck me so deeply that when he gave an altar call, I went forward. I wanted to get rid of the burden which came from the thought, “Where will you spend eternity?” which had kept me from sleeping nights for six weeks. (My wife went forward, too, but just to watch the people.)

As I knelt at the altar, the minister came and laid his hands on me. Something went

through me. Something happened to me.

When I left the church my wife saw the difference at once. ("Before when I would persuade him to go to the Catholic Church, he would curse when he came out and would want to fight the priest.") When I went home, I found I couldn't do the things I did before. I didn't curse. I couldn't play cards. I couldn't go dancing. *Nobody had said anything to me about these things.* But I still smoked and that night we went to the movies as usual. When I went to bed, I slept because my awful burden was gone. My wife was surprised at the change in me.

The following Wednesday we went back to the church and that night my wife was saved. Soon we bought a Bible and began to read it through. That was the happiest moment in our lives. The Bible opened my eyes. I knew the Bible stories from the Catholic Church, but I did not know they were *for me*. That is what makes the difference.

When a water baptismal service was announced, my wife wanted to be baptized, but I didn't because I did not like any ceremony. One of the ministers visited me and showed me in the Bible that *we* should be baptized and I consented. We continued going to church until April.

All this while I kept on smoking, and we went to the movies but not so often. We didn't feel so good there anymore, but we didn't know this was wrong. We still had not heard anything against smoking or going to movies, and if somebody had said anything to me, it might have done more harm than good.

The night of the baptismal service, I made sure on my way there that I would have enough tobacco with me so that I could smoke my pipe on the way home. So with my pipe sticking out of one of my back pockets and the other pocket full of

tobacco I went to the service. There I was really blessed, so much so that I forgot all about smoking going home.

And the next day I couldn't smoke when I tried to! I thought I was going to die. (My father had stopped smoking two weeks before he died. I thought maybe the same thing would happen to me.) I was scared! Then I went to the woman who had first testified to me and told her what had happened. "Praise the Lord!" she said. "You've been delivered from smoking!"

When we went to the movies the next time after our baptism, neither one of us could look at the picture. Both of us closed our eyes and just sat there thinking, "They are having a good meeting at church and here we sit looking at this junk!"

When we got out, we found each other had had the same experience. That was the end of the movies for us. We didn't fit there anymore.

About three years later I was baptized in the Holy Spirit. I could have been baptized sooner, but whenever the power of God came on me, I would run out of the church. Finally I wanted the baptism so badly that one Sunday night when I went to church, I said, "I don't care what happens to me, I want my baptism *tonight*." When the minister said, "Come forward and get your baptism *tonight*," I did and I got it.

Through all the years the Lord has helped us, has healed us, has kept us, and we must give Him the glory, *for the Lord did it all for us.*

"Likewise Reckon Yourselves . . ."

We are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. . . . Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him; . . . Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord—Romans 6: 4, 8, 11.

. . . FROM THE MINUTE you come to Jesus, you reckon yourselves dead. You reckon that you have no right to any feelings, no right to any desires, any wishes, and no right to any discussions with God. You absolutely give your will to God, and you do it by a heart that is perfect toward God—and every day of your life you yield your flesh and give up to God.

. . . Say: "God, You take me to an utter crucifixion where my will is utterly subjected to Thine."

. . . The mystery is a perfectly yielded will and heart, and an absolute giving up of self to God, where, between yourself and God, you KNOW that if you know the mind of the Lord you are going to do it. When you find out the mind of the Lord, that settles it.

. . . And you have got your choice. You can fool around a year and then another year, or you can go right down and say: "This thing of having my own way has GOT to stop! I will reckon that it is done! I am dead! and it is Christ that controls."

. . . And any person that has the reigning Christ is dead.

—MARTHA WING ROBINSON.

“Repent and Be Baptized”

THE FRUITS OF OBEDIENCE

By ELSIE KLAUS

*Christian Worker, Middle Village,
Long Island, N. Y.*

FROM STUDYING my Bible I learned that the first step in the right direction towards God is *repentance* (confessing and forsaking my sins). When I had done this, I saw, by faith, God's provision — Calvary's Lamb, Who His own self bare our sins in His own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins, should live unto righteousness. At that moment, light flooded my soul, and I became a new creature in Christ Jesus.

Then I learned that according to God's Word the next step of obedience is water baptism. Jesus in His last commission to His disciples said: “*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*” I discovered that repentance and water baptism were the usual proceedings in the early church. I was fully convinced, and all doubts were erased from my mind about baptism by immersion when I read the account of the Evangelist Philip and the Eunuch in the eighth chapter of Acts: “And they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.”

Once I had the clear light in my own mind and heart on a scriptural water baptism, nothing was going to hinder me. I realized that in order for me to enjoy my Christian walk with Jesus, I must obediently follow Him in water baptism. The Holy Spirit became an impelling force, urging me on to take this step.

On a given night when a baptismal service was scheduled, I packed my little bundle and was

all prepared to leave for the meeting, when the unpredictable happened. My father somehow became suspicious and did a little investigating, naturally discovering my intentions. The doors were securely locked, and I was forced to stay home that night, being forbidden to ever again attempt such folly. (My father had been converted and baptized some years before. However, he had become very bitter over some tragedies he had witnessed in his church so that now he had no use for Christianity at all. He did not want me to follow the Lord lest I end in the same disillusionment and sorrow.) Not hatred, but the love of God and a peace which passeth all understanding filled my entire being, and I literally seemed enveloped in a cloud of glory. How I praised and magnified His dear name.

Several months later another baptismal service was announced and I again made my desire known. This time I was a little wiser and took my parcel of clothing to a friend's home prior to the appointed night. When the time arrived, I slipped out quietly, unnoticed, and found my place with the other candidates. How thrilled I was that finally I could take this most important step of my Christian experience.

I shall never forget with what expectation I stepped into the water, and how graciously Jesus met me! To me it meant a burning of every bridge behind me, turning my back on all the past

and pressing toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus. There is something so wholesome and genuine in making a clean break with the world. I wanted no part of it, and neither did they desire my company. Its pleasures, lusts, and bright lights no longer attracted me. It was Jesus I wanted, and He gave Himself to me.

From that time forth there was a marked change in my home. Everyone knew that I had made up my mind to follow Jesus in spite of all their persuasive arguments not to. Other results followed this step of obedience. My mother was saved soon and shortly afterwards was also baptized in water.

My father thought our experience would not last as it had not with him. We could not do much talking to him, but we prayed much for him and witnessed by our lives. For seven years my father watched us closely. Then one Sunday morning, of his own accord, he decided to come to church—but as an enemy intending to disturb the meeting. God's Spirit restrained him so that he could do nothing, and he left the service as a licked dog. Once he had come, however, he could not stay away. Off and on he came until finally one Sunday morning he ran to the altar and broke, asking the minister and brethren, whom he had threatened with personal violence, for forgiveness. He was a changed man and ours was a family united in the love of God.

Married to Christ

By HANS R. WALDVOGEL

Then there arose a question between some of John's disciples and the Jews about purifying. And they came unto John, and said unto him, Rabbi, he that was with thee beyond Jordan, to whom thou barest witness, behold, the same baptizeth, and all men come to him. John answered and said, A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven. Ye yourselves bear me witness, that I said, I am not the Christ, but that I am sent before Him. He that hath the bride is the bridegroom: but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice: this my joy therefore is fulfilled (JOHN 3:25-29).

THIS QUESTION about baptism is as old as baptism itself. There has never been a question of religion that has been fought over so much as baptism. If you study church history, you will find that that has been the one thing the devil hated. Not christening—all the churches christen—and not a dead baptism, but the baptism that signifies burial with Christ and being raised together with Him in newness of life. That is the only baptism the Bible knows.

The question started while Jesus was baptizing. Here we read something very interesting, that Jesus did not baptize, but His disciples, and yet Jesus baptized more disciples than John. "Why, John, you'd better be careful of your flock! They are all running away from you! You'd better start a counter campaign because that evangelist from Nazareth is quite popular and everybody runs after Him! You'd better be very careful!" (They thought they were going to make John jealous.)

Some people baptize members into the church membership, and that's that. But why did the Lord Jesus Christ baptize? John tells us plainly. He is the Bridegroom, the Bridegroom from heaven. He has come and He has given His life for His church that He might sanctify her by the washing of water through the Word. That is what baptism signifies. It is baptism, not into a church, but baptism into Jesus Christ. It is the equivalent of a marriage.

When a young man proposes marriage to a girl, she can look him over and say "yes" or "no." Suppose he is a prince, a regent over a large country, and he comes and proposes to a poor girl from a beggarly family. She can look him over and can see the dazzling beauty of his face and hear the power of his masculine voice and can contemplate the great kingdom. Up till now she was a beggar; she had to beg for a crust of bread, for a penny. Now here is the king, and he proposes to make her a queen and all her troubles will be

over. What is she going to do? Well, you can guess it. She will most likely say, "Yes." But that would not satisfy him. He will bring her to the altar to confirm her vow before the rulers of the nation. That is the law of the land. She has to come to the altar and has to pronounce her willingness and her desire to have him for her kingly husband. And when that is done, then the minister pronounces them husband and wife, and what God has joined, let not man separate anymore.

That is what baptism means. John the Baptist says, "I am only the friend of the Bridegroom." Every minister that baptizes is the friend of the Bridegroom. His business is to propose—to bring the proposition of the Bridegroom, to preach His gospel. It is the invitation of the King to be separated from the world and joined unto Him in a heavenly betrothal. You are married to Him that is risen from the dead that you might bring forth fruit unto God. That is what baptism means.

Scriptural baptism is from heaven. Jesus asked the rulers of the Jews, "Is baptism from men or is it from God?" They didn't answer. If they said, "Yes," or if they said, "No," they would get into trouble. But the question is answered. Baptism is from God. That settles it. There is nothing to be done about it but to obey Him.

He that believeth and is baptized, Jesus said, shall be saved. Believeth what? Believeth the gospel. Believeth in the Lord Jesus Christ who has made an atonement for my sin. Believeth in this Saviour who comes to dwell within my heart. He that believeth receiveth Him and is baptized. Here is the heavenly Bridegroom proposing, offering Himself to every human being. "For God so loved the world that He gave His Son." What a marvelous place baptism—scriptural baptism—occupies. When Paul first came to Ephesus, he said, "What is the matter with you folks? You are dead. The main thing is missing." Nobody was speaking in tongues, nobody was praising the

Lord. Their hearts were hard, and when he preached he could feel that they were not able to receive the Word. What's the matter with you?" he asked them. "Have you received the Holy Spirit since you believed?"

"We never heard of it."

"Well, unto what were you baptized?"

Now let me ask you that. Unto what were you baptized? Whom were you married to? Unto what were you baptized? If you are baptized unto Jesus Christ you must receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. That is the gift of the Bridegroom. That belongs to it. John says in I John 5:8: "There are three that bear witness in earth, the Spirit, and the water, and the blood." He comes by the Spirit and by blood and by water. Not by water alone. And these three are one. Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and be baptized in His name, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

We have testimonies about what happens to people when they are baptized. I remember a young fellow in Kenosha who did not know much about baptism. But he went to the promise box the night of the baptism and pulled out that promise, "Repent and be baptized, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." When he came out of the water, he received such a mighty baptism in the Spirit that he could not walk for awhile. And for about three days he couldn't talk except in other tongues. He worked at

Nash's and the boys asked him, "What's the matter? What are you laughing about. What's funny?" He was just so full, just so "drunk." He had just taken God at His Word and God fulfilled His Word.

But now there is another question the Holy Ghost asks: "Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?" "God forbid!" is the answer. "How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?" (Rom. 6:2). "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death? Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3, 4).

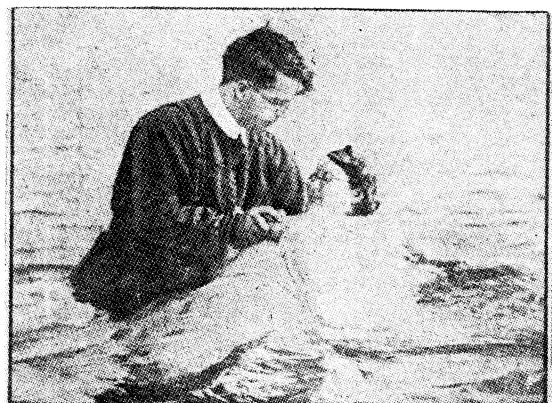
That is what makes the difference. It isn't the water, although God uses that water as a symbol of a grave, of a burial, and of a resurrection, but, after all, we are baptized by faith, a real acceptance of that powerful gospel which says, "I am no more mine own. I am buried with Christ and raised with Him, too."

A baptismal service is not just a feast for those who are going to be baptized, but for the whole church, the friends of the Bridegroom. We ought to rejoice in the voice of the Bridegroom, and so much of the blessing which the candidates receive depends on our standing in faith and in prayer with them. That will make the difference in those that are being baptized. About thirty years



(NEWS photo)
Crowds witnessed baptismal ceremonies at Sands Point, Canarsie. Rev. Waldvogel is about to submerge another woman member of his congregation.

Mrs. Julianna Liebmann Being Baptized, August 18, 1929



(NEWS photo)
Rev. Hans Waldvogel baptizes lady church member
BAPTIZED.—Twenty-five members of Ridgewood church were baptized yesterday at Sands Point, Canarsie.

Because of the opposition of her family Mrs. Liebmann had desired to be baptized without their knowledge. Of the twenty-five baptized at this time, however, the "New York Daily News" took and published her picture in the next day's paper—over 1,320,000 copies! As the result of her faithfulness her husband and son were converted, and nine years later they, too, were baptized.

ago, a Roman Catholic man came to the Lord. He was an inveterate smoker—smoking about forty cigarettes a day. (Now we don't preach against smoking. We preach Christ. But, you know, when Jesus comes, the devil's power is broken.) Nobody ever talked to him about smoking, but as he stepped into the water and then came out of the water, he felt a change had come over him! He could not smoke anymore. "Nobody ever told me this. I didn't know that Jesus had such power," he said. "I have tried awfully hard to get rid of my smoking and I couldn't." This wonderful act of being buried with Christ and raised with Him too set him free in a moment of time. It should!

There was another case, one of the very first ones baptized after I came to Brooklyn. On the 19th of August, 1925, we had our first baptismal service here. There was one man who had come in and introduced himself to me as the "chief of devils." He was really a bad man, but he came out of curiosity and he came in answer to prayer. We had prayed very definitely that God should save that man and God drew him. As he came into that meeting, the power of God knocked him down. While everybody else was standing to their feet, he knelt there. Something began to go around on the inside, he later testified, and he said in Schwaebisch; "*Ist dees emol nett?*" (This

suits me fine!) The Lord said, "*Deine sunden sind vergeben.*" (Your sins are forgiven!) Then he began to shout "Hallelujah!" The man was converted, and exactly three months later he was baptized. As he stepped into the water, he put up one hand and praised the Lord, but when he came out of the water he put up *both* hands. This had significance because one arm had been totally paralyzed since the war; he couldn't move it. That day he had fasted all day and prayed and asked God to heal him in the water. And God did! When he came out, here both arms came up and he was praising the Lord. What marvels God works in baptism! Even if there is no visible miracle, the covenant is made—the everlasting covenant.

It is a wonderful thing to be joined to this heavenly Bridegroom. And that is what baptism means. It means that Christ came from heaven, seeking a bride, making a proposal.

Who is the Bridegroom? He says, "He that hath the bride is the bridegroom."

And who is the bride? She that has given Him her word, "Yes, Lord."

That is what I do when I am baptized into Christ. I settle it forever that I'm not mine own. I don't belong to myself anymore but unto Him Who loved me and gave Himself for me.

True Repentance

The following poem was composed by Hans R. Waldvogel the day after his ninth birthday (Jan. 8, 1902), when he was contemplating baptism in water, as his own personal declaration of faith and thanksgiving and purpose of heart to cleave unto the Lord. Written in Swiss-German, it bore the title, RECHTE BUSSE.

*Ich will nun schliessen mit der Welt;
Will Gott gehorsam sein!
Ich will nur tun, was Ihm gefällt;
Und meine Seel' Ihm weihn.*

*Ich bin ganz nackt und bin ganz bloss,
Ich komme wie ich bin —
Und will nun ruhn im Vaterschoss
Der Jesum gab dahin.*

*Ich danke Dir o heil'ger Christ
Und will dich Ehr'n und Preisen,
Da Du für mich gestorben bist
Und ich Dein Kind darf heissen.*

*Jetzt ist es aus mit Krieg und Streit,
Satan ist überwunden!
Ich hab nun Gott mein Herz geweiht,
Geheilt sind meine Wunden.*

*Goodbye, old world, I'm through with you—
I shall obey my Lord.
To please my God, His will I'll do
And feed upon His Word.*

*Although unworthy and undone,
Just as I am I come
To find in His unchanging grace
My everlasting Home.*

*A thousand thanks to Thee, my Lord,
I'll praise Thee and adore
Because in love You purchased me,
Your child for evermore.*

*An end to all my war and strife,
Defeated is the foe—
To God belongs my heart and life
And healed is every woe.*

Deliverance for Soul and Body

Two Testimonies

By MRS. EDWARD B. KENNEDY

*Former Missionary to China and
Contributor to Bread of Life*

MY FATHER lived to be almost eighty-five years old. He had been the founder and for many years the president of Ohio Northern University. During his long tenure of office he had dealt with nearly thirty thousand students. One evening a few weeks before his death, I said to him, "Father, I have not seen you angry or out of patience excepting a very few times in all my life. How is it that you have kept calm and able to speak peaceably at all times when you have had so many vexations and provocations?"

He sat quietly for so long, as though he had not heard my question, that I thought he was not going to answer me. After some time had elapsed, he said, "In my youth I had a most violent temper. When I was eighteen, I heard a sermon preached on the second chapter of Acts, the thirty-eighth verse:

"Repent and be baptized . . . in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

I determined to be baptized and expected to receive the precious gift that was promised to those who obeyed. After my baptism, my temper was gone."

He said no more. He had never spoken of this experience to any of his family before, but we had often heard him say that he considered the second chapter of Acts the greatest and most important chapter in the Bible.

* * *

Many years ago, it was my privilege to meet a lady who had recently moved to our town from Wyoming. She was a close

neighbor, and we frequently exchanged religious experiences. She told me that her husband was a godless cowboy on the western plains. She often rode out with him to help him corral the cattle. Neither of them had anything to do with religion.

One day when she was lassoing a steer, she was seriously ruptured. She had a prolapsus of her inner organs so that after that she always had to wear a very heavy truss.

Someone sent them a religious paper telling that it was possible to be healed through faith in Jesus Christ. It was great news to them. They began to

seek God and both of them were truly converted. Then she desired to be baptized but hesitated as she dared not risk removing her truss and had no other to use in exchange when entering the baptistry. The ladies in the dressing room advised her to remove her truss and spoke to her with authority and faith. Although she knew that if she did so she faced strangulation, she listened to them, removed the truss, and went into the baptistry for baptism. She arose from the water perfectly healed. The rupture had gone into place and never came down.

A Vow Unto God

By ERNEST BIEBER

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"When thou vowest a vow unto God, defer not to pay it; for He hath no pleasure in fools: pay that which thou hast vowed. Better is it that thou shouldest not vow, than that thou shouldest vow and not pay"
(ECCLESIASTES 5:4, 5).

ALTHOUGH as a boy I did not know these verses existed, I nevertheless always strove to fulfill the meaning of them. Whenever I made a promise, no matter how trivial, I always did my utmost to keep it. I never had much respect for people who did not fulfill their promise or made promises without intent of keeping them.

The significance of water baptism was taught to me in Sunday school which I attended faithfully from childhood. I knew that if I were baptized, I would be promising the Lord that I would live for Him and I was not certain that I was really ready to fulfill that promise.

Then in my senior year of high school, my Sunday school teacher approached me very definitely about taking this step of obedience to the command of

the Lord. Also, two of my buddies were going to be baptized, and they were persuading me to be baptized with them. This caused me to make a decision. After much deliberation, I said, "Yes" to the Lord, which caused a greater peace to exist in my soul.

After being baptized at Canarsie Beach in 1939, I started my new life with the Lord. I began to study His Word more and also sought after Him more. Trials and temptations also came along, and I became discouraged many times at circumstances which arose. Many a time I felt like throwing up my hands and saying, "What's the use?" but then I reminded myself of my promise to the Lord, and this caused me to look to Him and let Him work out the problem.

I can truly say that if I had not taken this step of baptism when I did I would have fallen by the wayside, for I would not have had that purpose of heart needful to resist the temptations of the world which came my way.

Jesus Holds the Sceptre

By RONALD L. KLAUS

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FROM MY EARLY YOUTH I had witnessed baptism over and over again. It never lost its great significance to me. I saw what it meant to people. I saw what it did for them. I was awed, even at a young age, to see the glory of God descend and grip the lives of the baptismal candidates as they publicly identified themselves with their Redeemer and Lover.

Then came the day when I was personally confronted with baptism.

"Ronald ought to be baptized," said my pastor.

"Well, not this time, but at the next baptismal service," answered my mother.

And so, without my saying a word, it had been decreed. I really longed desperately to squeeze out of it because I really wasn't ready. Yet I really couldn't put my feelings into words well enough to express an objection.

A little over a year before this I had entered Junior High School, and with it a new stage of independence. I refused to be really identified with anyone or anything. I went along with a lot of things but was always wary of any sort of personal commitment. I had my own ideas and ambitions. Not that I wasn't religious. I certainly very sincerely wanted God. I claimed to have accepted Him as my Saviour. But there were other things. I was a "big shot" academically, socially, and in extra-curricular activities. "The world" was at my feet: I had my friends and my "good times." I was in every sense of the word "one of the boys"—one of the "good" boys to be sure, but nevertheless one of the

loose - thinking, loose - talking, loose - living, life-of-the-party boys. Righteousness never really became an issue. After all, how many Christians did I know that really lived holy lives? Besides, I was so clever. I could play the game from both ends, choosing my own way, living the way I wanted to, and still appeasing my conscience with my search after God.

I don't suppose I really fooled everybody. People started to find out about me. I really wasn't fooling myself either, for despite my attempts to drown it out, there was an ever deepening sense of frustration.

Baptism brought it all to a climax. I was trying to go two different directions and I knew it. Moreover, with the event approaching I had to decide. And yet there was only one decision. Baptism is like that. It brings people to a climax. That's why the modern church doesn't like it. People don't want to really commit themselves totally. They like to leave the trap door open, and hold on to just a little "flesh." They prefer a peace treaty with God to an unconditional surrender.

There is nothing easy about surrender. It is always preceded by a battle. I had accepted Jesus as my Saviour awhile back, but as I had become aware of some of the factors involved my puny surrender didn't cover them. So I had to fight it out all over. God only knows the extent of the battle.

There was a new factor that entered, however, and became the turning point of the battle. I had been praying, "Lord, I really don't want to be righteous, but if there's anything to it, let me really be hungry and

thirsty for righteousness." I suppose that's not much of a prayer, but the Lord saw my honesty and showed me that there *was* something to it. He revealed Himself. He was so wonderful; I just had to have Him. But my good, sweet, religious heart was black. I really started to crave cleansing. The prayer was answered; I became hungry.

And then, without any dramatic occurrence, I realized I wanted to be baptized. It was not something I convinced myself of. It was just there. I knew I wanted Jesus, and I knew the way. You might say, I lost that battle and Jesus won.

As I entered the waters that December evening, it was like placing my hand in His. His love burned within. I had gotten a glimpse of His beauty and was passionately driven to Him, young as I was. With great desire I surrendered. It was no feeling of remorse, or obligation, but something I wanted to do more than anything. I thought of the explanation I gave a schoolmate. I told him that I was coming back to school the next day a different fellow. I told him my language had to be different. I told him I wanted to stay away from questionable jokes. I told him I was going to follow Jesus.

I was buried right there in the tank. My old nature passed away. Not that I became a saint overnight. All hell still contested that victory, but there was no longer any question as to who was King.

I was raised up with Him. Words cannot describe the glory that flooded my soul. It was done. Jesus reigned. Some may wonder about baptism and its significance. Some may question its necessity. To me it was a day of revolution. A dirty young man was submerged holding the sceptre; a clean young man arose with Jesus holding the sceptre.

Like Naaman the Syrian

By HANS R. WALDVOGEL

A VERY GREAT HELP to us in our baptismal services in Germany has been Mrs. Maria Kleinbach of Weilheim. When we had hundreds of candidates to immerse, she was always a joyful assistant. This, in large measure, is doubtless due to her own experience of the resurrection life and power of God which was manifested when, as a dying woman, she was baptized in water.

A year or more before we started our evangelistic work in Germany, Mrs. Kleinbach was pronounced as absolutely incurable by the physicians who carefully studied her case at the hospital in Goeppingen where she was a patient. She was full of cancer so that her abdomen was tremendously swollen. She knew that she was a child of death.

Unable to get any help from medical science, Mrs. Kleinbach turned to The Great Physician. As she did so, she learned of a baptismal service to be held by Pastor Karl Fix. Convinced that immersion was scriptural, she wanted to obey God in this respect before going to heaven and handed in her application.

When Pastor Fix saw her, he said to himself, "It is murder to let that woman enter the water," and was reluctant to baptize her. Upon her insistence, however, he immersed her. Then he tried to help her out of the pool, only to drop her so that she fell and went under once more.

Before this happened she says she heard a voice saying, "To-day thou shalt experience your God in a wonderful way." She says she does not know how she finally got out of the baptismal pool, but when she did, she found that all her horrible, un-

earthly swelling was gone completely. She was healed!

When she came home that night, her children did not recognize her because she looked so different. "This is not our mama!" they exclaimed. The following day she was up in a tree picking cherries! Naturally this healing created quite a sensation in the town where she lived.

This experience of Mrs. Kleinbach in the baptismal waters was almost like that of Naaman, the Syrian. She stepped into the water a dying woman and came out of it with her flesh restored like that of a young child, so that it is not any wonder that now her testimony has been used of God in bringing others to the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ.



"And Ye Shall Receive the Gift of the Holy Ghost"

By ANNA M. SCHUETTE

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IT WAS in Milwaukee, Wisconsin in 1914 when the Lord in His great mercy and love drew me to Himself and caused me to drink of the glorious Fountain of Everlasting Life, when Jesus came into my heart and everything was changed and the joy of sins forgiven filled my soul.

Although I had belonged to a church all my life, I had never before heard that we must be born again to enter the Kingdom of God. And then when I heard that we could be filled with the Holy Spirit and live holy lives like the early Christians did, my joy knew no bounds. I wanted all God had for me and sought Him with all my heart, sometimes reading my Bible and praying until day-break.

At the same time I learned that we must follow Jesus in baptism by immersion, and I understood that only after this baptism in water could I expect to be filled with the Holy Spirit. Therefore I wanted to be baptized at once but was told there would not be any baptismal service for some time. I

was so hungry I could not wait and began to pray earnestly for the baptism in the Holy Spirit and so much the more as the time for this service drew nearer.

The day before and the day I was to be immersed I fasted and prayed continually while at work to receive the Holy Spirit when I would be baptized. My prayer to be filled with the Spirit was to be answered so as I walked into the water the power of God rested so heavily upon me I could hardly answer the preacher when he asked my name.

After being baptized I had to be lifted out of the water and was laid onto the platform while the glory of God flooded my whole being and the praises arose from my innermost being and seemed to go up until they reached heaven. I was lost to all around me and knew nothing of the rest of the service while the Holy Spirit filled me with the light and love of Jesus, and I am still praising God for giving me so wonderful a Saviour.

The Importance of Baptism

By GOTTFRIED A. WALDVOGEL

It is very important for every one coming to the Lord Jesus for salvation to be baptized scripturally, and that for the following four reasons:

Baptism is an ordinance of Christ.

During His earthly ministry already the apostles immersed those who joined the company of His followers (John 3:26; 4:1, 2). Following His resurrection He definitely commissioned His disciples to baptize those who would receive the gospel (Matt. 28:19, 20; Mark 16:16). Certainly that which is ordained by the Lord must be important. To disregard it would be inexcusable disobedience.

Baptism is performed in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The servant of Christ acts as His representative and in His authority. We are told in John 4:1 that "Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John." The next verse, however, explains that "Jesus Himself baptized not, but His disciples." They did it in His name, and it was just as good as if He performed the rite Himself. If John the Baptist's baptism was from heaven (Matt. 21:25), surely the baptism performed in His name is also from heaven.

Baptism is a public confession of our faith in Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord.

By it we profess our confidence in the power of His blood to cleanse us from sin, and also our surrender to Him as our Lord. It is the mark of discipleship, the oath of allegiance to the King. What a privilege to confess Him before men and angels in this way.

Baptism is a divine declaration of our being received into the Covenant of Grace.

By our being immersed into water and raised out of it, the Lord declares that we are buried with Him, and raised with Him, that we share in the provision of His redeeming death and in the power of His resurrection life (Rom. 6:3, 4). Thus the promise of salvation is divinely sealed by baptism to the individual believer. It is a declaration of our emancipation from the power of sin, sealed to us personally in symbolic language.

