

Trends

According to a 2017 survey, 49% of U.S. adults reported buying lottery tickets . . . 56% of those who earn between \$36,000 and \$89,999 play the lottery. Fewer of those making under \$36,000 bought tickets, only 40%, and about 53% who make above \$90,000 bought a ticket . . . when lower income players do buy tickets, they spend far more money . . . those in the bottom fifth of income spend the most on lottery tickets, and more than twice as much as the richest lottery players - \$433 a year vs. \$193 a year.

- via CNN Money

1 Timothy 6:9-10: "But those who desire to be rich fall into temptation and a snare, and into many foolish and harmful lusts which drown men in destruction and perdition. For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil, for which some have strayed from the faith in their greediness, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows."

Sentence Sermons

"I despise the Lottery. There's less chance of you becoming a millionaire than there is of getting hit on the head by a passing asteroid."

—Bryan May

Ecclesiastes 5:10: "He who loves silver will not be satisfied with silver; Nor he who loves abundance, with increase. This also is vanity."

News & Notes

Pray for one another: "The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." (Jas. 5:16) Pray for the success of our gospel meeting (Mar. 24-29) with Stacy Crim doing the preaching.

Please pray for Alex Chambers and his family. Alex's mother recently passed away.

Please pray for Ryan & Jennifer and the brethren of the Northern Michigan church of Christ. Jennifer's latest embryo transfer was unsuccessful.

Please keep sisters Virginia Brown and Wilma Cardwell in your prayers. Their faithfulness sets a great example and gives encouragement to all! Ditto for Al (our Barnabas!).

Pray for all the lost souls, especially those in the greater Bloomington area. Pray that Westside might be an influence for good in this community.

Pray for the all of our students: elementary, secondary and college. Our young people face many trials and temptations at school.

There are many needy saints, including preachers! Can you help?! Let me know.

Please let us know of any in need of our prayers! We'll announce it and post it.

Words of Life is published by the **Westside Church of Christ** meeting at 1301 N. Enterprise, Bloomington, IN 47404

Times of Service: Bible Study, Sunday 9:30 AM and Wednesday 7:00 PM; Worship, Sunday 10:30 AM and 5:00 PM

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Please direct questions and comments to the editor.

Words of Life

Westside
church of Christ

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"Lord, to whom shall we go? You have the words of eternal life."

John 6:68



Gospel Meeting

Stacy Crim of
Tuscumbia, Alabama

March 24-29

Sunday, March 24TH: 9:30^{AM}, 10:30^{AM}, 5:00^{PM}

Monday – Friday, March 25TH – 29TH; 7:00^{PM}

Theme: **Faces of Faith**

Sun (AM): **Known Faith**

Sun (AM): **Righteous Faith**

Sun (PM): **Fixed Faith**

Mon: **Genuine Faith**

Tues: **Courageous Faith**

Wed: **Great Faith**

Thurs: **Saving Faith**

Fri: **Jesus the Author and Finisher of Our Faith**

**Every member at every service!
Bring someone!**

The Washing of Regeneration, the Renewing of the Holy Spirit: Titus 3:5

Bill H. Reeves

“not by works done in righteousness, which we did ourselves, but according to his mercy he saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.”

This statement of Paul in Tit. 3:5 states that God in mercy saved man, employing two factors: the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. To what is reference made by Paul in these two factors? We analyze them in the light of the Scriptures.

1. God saves man through the instrumentality, first, of a washing that regenerates man, or gives spiritual life to him that spiritually was dead in sin (Eph. 2:1,5). The only “washing” in the New Testament is that of baptism in the name of Christ unto the remission of sins (Acts 22:16). God commanded baptism in water (Matt. 3:16; John 3:5; Acts 8:37,38; 10:47). Read the many passages: Mk. 16:16; Jn. 3:3,5; Acts 2:38; 10:48; 22:16; Rom. 6:3,4; 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:26,27; Eph. 5:26; Col. 2:12; Heb. 10:22; 1 Pet. 3:21. Jesus made baptism part of righteousness (Matt. 3:14,15). And yet the Protestant Reformers and their churches today deny the essentiality of baptism for salvation! Amazing, indeed!

The Greek word (*loutron*), here translated “washing,” is found only one time more, in Eph. 5:26, “washing of water.” Thayer tells us that the Greek word refers to baptism. The apostle Peter tells us that baptism is not a washing of filth from the flesh (1 Pet. 3:21), but an answer of a good conscience as one is taught in the word (Eph. 5:26, Greek, “in word” or “by the word or with the word”). The teaching of the word accompanies Scriptural baptism. Baptism without the word is simply water!

Baptism is called a “washing of regeneration” because when one is scripturally baptized he is born again (Jn. 3:3, Gr. *anōthen*, or from above, Jas. 1:17; 3:15,17). He walks in newness of life (Rom. 6:4) as a new creature (2 Cor. 5:17; Gal. 6:15).

The Greek term “regeneration” is found only in Tit. 3:5 and in Matt. 19:28, “And Jesus said unto them, Verily I say unto you, that ye who have followed me, in the regeneration when the Son of man shall sit on the throne of his glory, ye also shall sit upon twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel.” When Jesus ascended on high after his resurrection, he sat down on his throne (Heb. 1:3; 8:1; 10:12; 12:2; Rev. 3:21). We are in the regeneration now, as in this gospel age sinful man can be born again. The apostles are seated on their thrones now in this last dispensation, and by their word (Acts 2:42; 1 Jn. 4:1-6) they are judging spiritual Israel, the church (Gal. 6:16). This apostolic rule will continue until time is no more (Matt. 28:20), “unto the consummation of the age.”

2. Involved in the “washing of regeneration” is also the “renewing of the Holy Spirit.” There is nothing in this last phrase that points to baptism or to any other thing “in the Holy Spirit.” The Holy Spirit renews (Gr., *anakainosis* = *again plus new*, in the sense of different); he does it through the word that he has inspired. It is by his instructions that man is baptized into one body, the church that Jesus built (1 Cor. 12:13; Eph. 1:22,23). This renewal is of him! It is affected by him! It is what he does through the word! He develops through his revealed word the life of a Christian.

This phrase does not teach the so-called “baptismal regeneration” of Catholicism and Lutheranism. Baptism is not a “sacrament” with merits in it. Baptism alone does not save, just as faith alone or repentance alone do not save. But neither does the New Testament teach that baptism is non-essential as so teach the so-called “evangelical” churches. See paragraph 1. above and the many passages cited.

The Greek word for “renewing” is found additionally only in Rom. 12:2, “be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Christians do not allow themselves to be conformed to the world but to be transformed by making their mind, or thinking, a new and different one. They have in themselves the mind of Christ (Phil. 2:5-8). Christ teaches them (Eph. 4:20,21). They are renewed (a different but similar Greek word) in the spirit of their mind (Eph. 4:23). Literal water does not wash away sins, but neither does literal blood!

Neither is baptism a mere “exterior symbol of an interior grace,” as sectarians state the matter. (Notice that when they cite this statement they never give a citation for it, for none exists in the Scriptures!) In Christian baptism is appropriated the blood of Christ because in baptism people are “buried therefore with him through baptism into death” (Rom. 6:4; Col. 2:12). It is the only way to contact the blood of Christ! It is the death of Christ on the cross that makes possible for God to save (pardon) us (Eph. 1:7). That blood is reached in baptism. Is there another way to get into the blood of Christ? Can we believe into it, or repent into it, or confess into it?

It is interesting to note how copious are the comments of the sectarians on the two phrases of this verse, Tit. 3:5. Teaching salvation by faith only they have to affirm that baptism is a mere symbol or picture of salvation, but not essential to salvation, or teach “baptismal regeneration” and deny immersion. They have to use a lot of rodeo and “explanation,” in order to deny the obvious meaning of the passage and to defend their false position. They need to omit “only” from “faith only” and to teach that the Holy Spirit teaches us to be baptized in order to be washed, born again and made into new creatures; that is, Christians. Titus 3:5 teaches that the Holy Spirit affects two results: the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Spirit. This results from one’s being baptized (after believing, repenting, and confessing his faith in Christ) in the name of Christ unto the remission of his sins like some three thousand did on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:38, 41).

Though there is no evidence that Paul saw Christ face-to-face before that encounter on the Jerusalem-to-Damascus road, he had ample opportunity to know the facts regarding Jesus’ miracles, teachings, and influence.

Of course, all of these eight men were inspired of God, but in this brief piece, we have examined their credibility only in the light of recognized historical principles. Their writings pass the test superbly.

“Most assuredly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.”

John 3:3