

WHY THE INTERNATIONAL CHURCH OF CHRIST MAY BE DANGEROUS TO YOUR HEALTH

By Pastor Ron Keller

Nobody likes a wise guy!

Critics often fall into that category, but not all. Some are very helpful. Siskel and Ebert do a good service for movie-goers by critiquing the latest films. Movie producers, writers and actors all depend on a satisfactory review if their efforts are to be rewarded at the box office. Consumer advocates like Ralph Nader and David Horowitz let the public know whether a certain product can live up to what their advertisements claim. Yes, these critics and others like them provide an essential and appreciated function.

But, no one likes a critic who is just a wise guy! One criticizing just for the sake of criticism comes off as the egotistical, know-it-all-I'll-show-you-up-kind.

I'm going to be a critic. But I have no intention of being a wise guy. I will serve a most useful purpose namely to protect you and yours from becoming brainwashed by a dangerous mind-controlling sect known as the International Church of Christ (ICC). Locally called The Los Angeles Church of Christ.

Their members are indoctrinated to believe they alone are Christ's Church upon this earth while all the rest of us are damned to hell. They train their people as one might train a Pit Bull. "Sic 'em" to them means "Go after as many who are not of our breed and if you can lock your jaws on one, don't let loose."

You might ask, "So what? What right do you have to judge them? Can't they believe what they want to?" Yes, they can. But at the same time, every child of God has been given the right, by

the Holy Spirit, to judge the teaching of another. We will not agree on everything. And, praise God, our oneness in Christ does not demand that we do. But there is a vast difference between subtle misunderstandings of secondary doctrines and downright heresy.

Heretic is error of a major sort. Martin Luther defined the heretics of his day as *“strutting peacocks”* who *“seek self-made individualistic doctrine and manner of faith and life, apart from commonly accepted ones.* Thus, a heretic is *One who is self-willed in matters pertaining to God, a strange fellow, who knows of something better and chooses his own way to heaven; a way the ordinary Christian does not travel.”*¹

There were heretics in the days of Jesus and the early church. He and the apostles were constantly warning against them. *“Watch out for false prophets,”* said Jesus (Matt. 7:15). John wrote, *“do not believe every spirit, but test the spirits to see whether they are of God, because many false prophets have gone out into the world”* (I John 4:1). When the Bereans were confronted with new teaching, the record says of them, *“they searched the Scriptures daily to see if these things were true”* (Acts 17:11). The New Testament gives three instances when church discipline must be practiced. One has to do with adultery (I Corinthians 5:1-5) while the other two deal with false teaching. Paul warned against those who taught what they should not teach, and told Titus, *“rebuke them sharply, that they may be sound in the faith”* (Titus 1:13). The other has to do with a divisive spirit which is the bitter-fruit of heresy. *“Reject a divisive man after the first and second admonition,”* writes Paul. *“knowing that such a person is warped and sinning, being self-condemned”* (Titus 3:10-11).

The Galatian epistle was written to stop heresy from destroying those congregations. *“I am amazed,”* writes Paul. *“that you are so quickly deserting Him who has called you by the grace of God, for a different gospel”* (Galatians 1:6). The Galatian heresy was turning away from the grace of God to a salvation through the law, by which no man is made righteous. When some of their teachers were making circumcision a condition of salvation, Paul

responded:

“But God forbid that I should boast except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, by whom the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world. For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision avails anything, but a new creation. And as many as walk according to this rule, peace and mercy be upon them...” (Galatians 6:14-16)

Paul emphatically stated that our only boast is in the cross of Christ; our only contingency for fellowship is that we are new creatures in Christ and following the law or not has nothing to do with it.

Yes, there are times to judge. Heresy must be exposed and heretics severely reprimanded. For too long, the church, under the banner of unity, has failed to speak out. The church has said, “We don’t want to offend anyone. It’s not Christian to bash another’s faith.” That kind of attitude must change. Michael Horton, editor of *The Agony of Deceit* wrote: *“Tolerating enemies of the historic Christian just as though they were our brethren is not love, but adultery. The substance of the faith is the only basis for unity.”*²

Understanding that, I have an assignment from the Holy Spirit to expose heresy wherever it exists, permits me to examine the International Church of Christ.

Let’s expose first:

I. Their Divisiveness In Sectarianism

A sect separates itself from all other believers by declaring itself as “the one and only church.” ICC claims they are “the Kingdom of God on earth today.” A former member of ICC stated: *“If pressed by an outsider, they may say that there are some people who come to the correct conclusions about the Bible outside of the ICC. In practice, though, the ICC believes they are the one and only true Church at present, and that it is high/y unlikely, if even possible, for anyone to be saved elsewhere.”*³

The apostle Paul described sectarianism as dividing the body of Christ. *“The body is one and has many members....If the whole body were an eye, where would be the hearing? If the whole were hearing, where would be the smelling.., if they were all one member, where would the body be?”* (1 Corinthians 12:12, 17, 19). ICC has segmented itself from the body of Christ to claim itself as the whole body. Like an amputated tonsil claiming total viability apart from the rest of the body parts, so is the International Church of Christ.

Karen Grey, an ICC member said, *“We are indoctrinated with the belief that nearly all outside the group are hell bound, and their personal Bible studies are not sufficient to reveal the truth.”*⁴ To ICC, all believers outside their church are ignorant of God’s Word and bound for hell. This makes you and me “free-game” for their proselytizing and evangelizing techniques. Jamie Alonzo, one of our members, was recently approached by a person from the Los Angeles Church of Christ. “Do you have a church?,” she was asked. When she said she attended CCV, she was told, “if you want to be saved, you have to belong to the Los Angeles Church of Christ.” Jamie responded “You’re wrong! Salvation is in Christ, not in a church.” Right on! The church has to be saved. As Paul put it: *“Christ is the head of the Church, His body, and is Himself its Savior”* (Ephesians 5:23).

People who are sectarian see themselves as God’s elite. They are prideful and arrogant, an attitude that is a heinous crime against the Spirit of God. It is one of the works of the flesh which lusts against the Spirit and is contrary to it. It is specifically named in a catalogue of vices including immorality, impurity, licentiousness, sorcery, idolatry, drunkenness and the like. We are plainly informed that one who deliberately condones and defends the party spirit will not inherit the kingdom of God. (See Galatians 5:17-24)

One might as well try to justify adultery as to sanction partisan strife and schism. To speak lightly of sectarianism is to be guilty of mockery, and to walk after ungodly desires. Jude reminded his

readers that *“there would be mockers in the last times who would walk according to their own ungodly lusts. These are sensual persons, who cause divisions not having the Spirit”* (Jude 17. 18). Separationism and exclusivism are grievous offenses against God.

The Holy Spirit never prompted the origin of any sect. No one was ever baptized into a sect or party under the influence of the Holy Spirit. No one has ever promoted segregating the family of God under the leading of the Holy Spirit. All such is the work of the flesh.

There are two kinds of sects: those who teach errant doctrine as though it were the truth, and those who crystallize around a secondary truth as if it were the primary truth.

In the first type of sect, one teaches errant doctrine as though **it were the truth**. Being wrong about a doctrine and being sectarian are two different things. One may be wrong about a secondary doctrine, but if he does not make his belief a test of fellowship, he has not created a schism. We should learn there are certain doctrines that give room for varied interpretations. Can a Christian lose his salvation? Are all the gifts of the Spirit available for the church now? Will Christ come before the tribulation, halfway through it, or at the end? These are important questions, but none are so great that if we differ in our understanding, it should cause a schism between us.

The second type of sect is one which teaches a truth, but crystallizes around it as if that truth determines one's salvation. Obviously, there are truths we must hold to for salvation. The most important centers around the person of Jesus Christ. None must differ about Him. Yet, in the larger sphere of religion, there are many beliefs about Jesus. Yet, there is only one Jesus. Your salvation depends on believing in the right One. Jesus' most important question was. *“Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am?”* (Matthew 16:13). The answer is not secondary, but primary doctrine. Simon Peter had it right when He said. *“You are*

the Christ, the Son of the living God” (Matthew 16:16).

Primary doctrines pertain to salvation: secondary doctrines do not. **All truths are equally true, but they are not equally important.** A sect takes a secondary’ truth and makes it as important, or more so, than a primary truth. **One can believe that baptism is by total immersion and a command of Scripture. They would be right. But to crystallize the doctrine of baptism to the exclusion of the doctrine of grace is as wrong as if they did not believe in baptism at all.**

The late W. Carl Ketcherside, an apologist for the mainline Church of Christ, wrote:

“It is always better to be right than to be wrong about anything, but our hope of eternal life is not depending on being right about everything. It is depending upon being in the right One (Jesus.) When He is our everything, nothing else can be! And rightness is a relationship; not an intellectual attainment.”⁵

The International Church of Christ teaches it alone has the corner on the truth, condemning all to hell who believe differently. Salvation is then dependent upon intellectual correctness, not upon simple trust in Jesus. Such is sectarianism, and it is something God hates.

II. Their Doctrine On Salvation

The International Church of Christ teaches **baptism as essential to salvation.** In fact, they carry it beyond what others do who hold to a similar teaching.

First Principles, the ICC training manual, states that *“baptism is for the forgiveness of sins and is the point in time a person is saved.”⁶* Furthermore it states one must be “baptized as a disciple.” This means a person must have the correct understanding of baptism at the time of baptism, must have fully repented of their sins, and must have committed to living as a disciple of Christ, prior to baptism, or the baptism is invalid and

the person unsaved.⁷ Also, one's baptism is not valid unless it is administered by one of their own disciplers.⁸ (Does this mean no one was saved prior to the founding of the ICC by Kip McKean in 1979?)

Being "baptized as a disciple" presents an inconsistency in theology. Baptism is becoming a Christian. A Christian is a disciple. You cannot be baptized until you are a disciple. It does not take a rocket-scientist to discover that the doctrine of "disciple's baptism" is not internally consistent.⁹

In ICC, the potential candidate for baptism must attend a series of Discipleship classes. On three occasions I have asked ICC people, "If during this discipleship study one were to die before they get baptized, would they be saved?" In each case the answer was the same. "It wouldn't happen!" Such is wishful, but naive thinking.

Long before the ICC was a twinkle-in-the-eye of its founder Kip McKean, I held a similar theology. When I was a youth pastor of a small Christian Church in Southern California, a teenager who quarterbacked the local high school football team began attending my church. On a certain weekday he came to the office of my senior pastor to inquire how he might be saved from his sins. My pastor shared with him the gospel and the young man gave his life to Jesus. Arrangements were made for his baptism on the following Sunday so family and friends could witness this joyful event.

Smiling from ear-to-ear, the young quarterback left my pastor's office, got into his car and headed home. He never arrived. While crossing an intersection, his car was broad-sided, and he was killed instantly.

Of course it was a tragedy!

However, my most vivid memory of that day was the reaction of my pastor. He was in greater grief over not having baptized him on-the-spot, than he was of his death. My pastor believed that it

was baptism that saved and since this teenager had not been baptized he had no assurance of salvation.

What a revelation that was to me! Would God really show no mercy? Was he now burning in hell? He had confessed his faith in Jesus and had repented of his sins. He had no hesitation about getting baptized. The only reason for delay was his desire to share this moment with loved ones. From that event, I rethought my position on baptism. My study led to the assurance of that young man's salvation!

In Matthew 28:19-20 Jesus gives us the Great Commission. *“Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and a/the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you...”* The one command of the Great Commission is “make disciples.” The word “disciple” comes from the (Greek, “*mathetes*” from where we get our word “math.” It denotes one who is a learner or follower of Christ. A disciple is one already saved. One becomes a disciple by hearing and yielding to the preaching of the gospel. Affixed to the command “make disciples” are two participial phrases: ‘baptizing them” and “teaching them.” Once one has accepted the gospel, they are baptized and taught the commands of Jesus. Baptism is no more the point of becoming a disciple than is hearing every command of Christ. When the ICC says, one must “be baptized as a disciple” they are right! However, a “disciple” is saved before baptism, not **at** baptism.

The book of Acts is often used to establish “baptismal regeneration.” However, it is difficult to establish doctrine from Acts since it is a historical narrative, **not** a theological treatise like the epistles. The book of Acts abounds with transitions. Nothing is normal in such a state. This book transitions from the ministry of Jesus to that of the apostles; from the Old Covenant to the New Covenant; from Israel as God's witness nation to the church as God's witness people. The book of Hebrews sets forth the theology of the transition from the Old Covenant to the New, while the epistles in general interpret this historical narrative.

So let's first look at baptism in light of the epistles before we apply it to the teachings of Acts.

Perhaps the best place to begin is I Peter 3:21, "*There is also an antitype which now saves us - baptism.*" The key word is "antitype" coming from the Greek "*antitupon*," meaning a "symbol" or "that which corresponds to." It is a reverse type, that is to say, a symbol which looks back to its representative. The context is of Noah, who prepared an ark, wherein eight souls were brought safely through the water.

Peter's analogy is not an easy one to follow, but it does speak of a great truth. In Noah's day, those who were in the water died and were buried. So baptism is a symbol of dying to the old life of sin and burying it once for all. However, the ones who were saved were not in the floodwaters, but in the ark. In Peter's analogy, the ark is a symbol of Christ. If one is not in Christ by dying to the old self, they cannot be saved.

The real "antitype" of baptism is not the floodwaters, but the death and resurrection of Jesus. In context Peter writes: "*For Christ suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit*" (I Peter 3:18). In baptism one is symbolically taken back to Calvary where Christ died for their sins, then to the empty tomb from where He was raised by the Holy Spirit. In those historic facts alone, rests our salvation. Baptism simply takes us back to those truths in its symbolic meaning.

This same word in plural, "*antitupa*," was used in the ancient Christian Church to refer to the bread and wine in the communion.¹⁰ The bread and wine were not the literal body and blood of Christ as Catholics maintain, but **an** "*antitupa*": symbols that look back to the cross. Baptism is no different. It is a symbol of salvation. If ICC is going to make baptism the point in time in which one is saved, then they must change their theology about the Lord's Supper, when Jesus said. "*Take eat, this is my body which is broken for you, . . . this cup is the new covenant in My blood...*" (I Corinthians 11:24-25). Is the bread and the wine the literal body and blood of Jesus? Of course not, they are "*antitupa*."

In like manner baptism is *“antitupon”*: a symbol of salvation.

This same symbolism is found in Romans 6:4 where Paul writes, *“we are buried with him by baptism into death...”* Our baptism is in relationship to Christ’s death. It is a present act of obedience on the part of a disciple which takes him back to the cross where Christ died for his sins. Baptism is not the literal death of Christ, but a present identification with His death; it is a symbolic re-enactment on our part of what Christ did for us two thousand years ago.

To reinforce this truth, Paul separates baptism from the gospel. To the Romans, he wrote. *“For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes...”* (Romans 1:16). In his first letter to the Corinthians. Paul wrote *“I am thankful I did not baptize any of you... For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel”* (1 Corinthians 1:14-17). **If baptism was the literal point-in-time in which one is saved, how could Paul make such a statement?**

What have we learned? Baptism is a symbol of the truth, not the truth itself. It points back to the gospel, but is in itself not the gospel. The gospel of Christ saves, not baptism.

Having reached this conclusion, let’s look at a pet passage of ICC: Acts 2:38. *“Repent, and let each 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.”* The key word is the preposition “for” (*eis*). Be baptized *“for the remission of sins.”* The question is: Does baptism remit sin making one saved, or does it represent one’s cleansing after being saved?

This preposition can have two meanings: one causative and the other resultive. To illustrate, one can say. “I am going to the office for my briefcase, “ clearly causative, meaning to get the briefcase. If I apply this meaning to Acts 2:38, the ICC has a correct interpretation: one should be baptized to get or receive the forgiveness of sins.

On the other hand, if one says, “I am taking an aspirin for my headache” the meaning is clearly resultive. I am not taking an aspirin to get a headache, I already have it. Applying this meaning to Acts 2:38, one is baptized because they already have the forgiveness of sins. This clearly contradicts the ICC.

How do we know which usage of the preposition is correct? Remember the principle: the epistles interpret Acts, and they teach baptism as a symbol of the truth, not the truth itself. Baptism illustrates the gospel, and we are baptized because our sins are already forgiven.

If one desires to explore Acts 2:38 further, let him do so from a careful study of Greek grammar. One will see what may not otherwise be so obvious. With “you” being understood, the verse reads, “*You (second person, plural) repent*”: “*let each of you (third person, singular) be baptized...*”; “*for the forgiveness of your (second person, plural) sins*, “as in the phrase, “*and you (second person, plural) shall receive the gift of the Holy spirit.*”

When you grammatically align the forgiveness of sins and the receiving of the Holy Spirit, it conforms to repentance, not baptism. Organizing the verse accordingly it would read: “*Everyone of you, repent, for the forgiveness of everyone of your sins, and everyone of you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, [so] let each of you individually be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ.*”

To make “baptism” as causing the remission of sins would be to make the text say, “Let him be baptized for the remission of all your sins, and let him (another) be baptized for the remission of all your sins,” and so on to each person in the group, so that each one would be baptized for the remission of the sins of all the people in this group.¹¹ Such a teaching clearly contradicts other Scriptures and is not even believed by the ICC. The grammar is clear: the remission of sins is the result of repentance, not of baptism.

Karl Barth, though a liberal theologian, wrote: “*If God cannot*

*save apart from baptism, then baptism is equal to God.*¹² For one to say baptism saves is to add to the gospel; it is to be guilty of the Galatian heresy. False teachers called Judaizers were declaring that Christ could not save apart from circumcision and the law of Moses. Paul responded, *“You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you? Before your very eyes Jesus was portrayed as crucified. I would like to learn just one thing from you: Did you receive the Spirit by observing the law, or by believing what you heard?”* (Galatians 3:1-2). He went on to say that those who believed God were, like Abraham, counted as righteous (before circumcision*), while those who relied on observing the law were under a curse. (Note: Romans 4:9-12 declares that Abraham was accounted as righteous by faith; in Genesis 15:6 Abraham trusts God for righteousness. However, he was not circumcised until fifteen years later as recorded in Genesis 17:26. Therefore, Abraham was saved before he was circumcised.)

When the ICC adds baptism to the gospel, they are saying in effect, Christ is insufficient to save by Himself. In this regard, they are no different than the Judaizers. It has not been our purpose to minimize the importance of baptism. It is clearly a command of Scripture and the expected practice of every disciple. Without a doubt, baptism is connected to salvation, in that it has no meaning apart from it. But it is not our Savior; it is not even our co-redeemer. Salvation is in the name and the person of Jesus Christ and is received by His grace (see Acts 4:12 and Ephesians 2:9-10).

Discipleship is an important part of the ICC. It means every member is assigned another member as a mentor, to whom they report, confess their sins, and whom they are expected to obey and emulate.

The reports are rampant from former members of ICC that the discipling program has been a dangerous mind control, where the one being disciplined literally goes through a personality change which conforms them to the group norm.

In 1985, Dr. Flavil R. Yeakley Jr., of Church Growth Institute at Abilene Christian University, was given the assignment of

assessing the effect of ICC's disciplining on one's personality. He tested 900 members with the Meyers-Briggs Type Indicator which is one of the leading non-psychiatric personality instruments in use today. After the tests were given and before any conclusions were drawn, Yeakley did MBTI comparison studies with five main line denominations: Baptists, Catholics, Lutherans, Methodists, Presbyterians and five "manipulative sects": Church of Scientology, Hare-Krishna, Maranatha Campus Ministries, Unification Church, and The Way International.

Results in the five main line denominations showed no significant change in psychological type scores. However, in the five "manipulative sects" plus ICC he discovered.

"The (ICC) is producing in its members the very same pattern of unhealthy personality change that is observed in studies of well-known manipulative sects. . . The data proves that there is a group dynamic operating in that congregation (ICC) that influences members to change their personalities to conform to the group norm."

Let's put this in plain language: a manipulative sect, through an authoritative figure, subtly controls the mind of its group disciples until all conform. Ultimately, whatever the leader of the group says, they do. That's dangerous! This is what happened back in November 1978 to members of People's Temple when 900 of them left California and moved to Jonestown, Guyana, at the insistence of their leader, Jim Jones. At his command they all drank cyanide laced Kool-Aid resulting in mass suicide.

This is not to say ICC is another People's Temple. But, where there is manipulation through mind control and where the doctrine of absolute submission to a leader exists, there is potential for tragedy.

I have been assured by two ministers of the Los Angeles Church of Christ, Ward Hebert and Steve Berger, that their disciplining approach is not that authoritative nor binding. We want to believe that. On the other hand, a young lady named Holly

came to CCV from the L.A. Church of Christ. In telling me her story she said: *“The last straw was when my discipler followed me on a date. The next day I received orders from my discipler — the man you dated was wrong for you, break it off, the clothes you were wearing were too expensive for your budget, and your good night kiss was held too long.”* The warning that comes from former ICC members, and the study done by Dr. Yeakley should not fall on deaf ears.

Furthermore, we were told the purpose of disciplining is *“to keep people saved.”* Each disciple is to be in daily contact with their discipler to confess their daily sins, so as to be assured at that moment they are still saved. Steve Berger told us that no one can have an assurance of salvation. *“I know I’m saved today,”* he said, *“but I just take it one day at a time. In the end, I hope I am.”* Here lies an irony: the ICC disciplers do not know for sure they are saved, yet they disciple to make sure someone else is saved. If they cannot be assured of their own salvation, what confidence can they instill in the one they are discipling?

How sad! Whatever happened to the keeping grace of God! Paul wrote:

“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God” (Romans. 5:1-2).

On the basis of our faith, Christ brings us a saving grace wherein we stand. The word “stand” (*histemi*) means to stand firm, unmovable.

This grace in which we stand has the power to keep us saved — not a discipler!

Jude wrote of “God our Savior”:

“Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy.” (Jude 24)

It's God our Savior who keeps us from stumbling — not a discipler!

In John's Gospel, Jesus speaks of how He and His Father protect their flock:

"My sheep hear My voice, and I know them, and they follow Me. And I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; neither shall anyone snatch them out of My hand. My Father, who has given them to Me, is greater than all; and no one is able to snatch them out of My Father's hand." (John 10:27-29)

It is the gripping hands of the Father and the Son that keep us safe— not a discipler!

The apostle John gave the purpose statement for his gospel: *"...these things are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name" (John 20:31).*

Paul wrote of the Holy Spirit:

"...you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the promise of His glory" (Ephesians 1:13-14).

It is the Holy Spirit who seals us and guarantees our future inheritance — not a discipler!

Again Paul:

"What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who can be against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him freely give us all things? Who shall bring a charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is he who condemns? It is Christ who died, and furthermore is also risen, who is even at the right hand of God, who also makes intercession for us. Who shall separate us from

the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Yet in all these things we are more than conquerors through Him who loved us. For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.” (Romans 8:3 1-35, 3 7-39).

By Him and through Him we are more than conquerors—we don’t need a discipler!

The surest reason I know I am saved is God said so!

His grace keeps me from falling. Praise God I am saved, not because I confess my sins to another sinner, but because I am in the One who has never sinned. It is His loving, gripping arms wrapped around me wherein I find security, for He says. *“I’ll never leave you nor forsake you”* (Hebrews 13:5).

No one likes a wise guy, but we all appreciate wisdom. Therefore, let us admire the commitment of ICC people to evangelism and to their church. Let us now acknowledge our need to reach the lost; but in so doing, let us affirm the wonders of God’s grace which not only saves, but keeps us saved.

While it would be a sin of disobedience for a Christian not to (soon) be baptized (as scripture clearly teaches it), it is one’s faith in Jesus that brings eternal life — not baptism, and not a discipler!

(This non-copyrighted article was written before 1999)

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