

EXPLANATORY NOTES WILL FOLLOW THIS CHAPTER...

Chapter 1

Dismissing the Baptism of Natural Water

One of the hardest things to explain away, as I've come to see, is the ordinance of water baptism in the modern church world. It's very sacred to people; for, many believe it to be a necessary step for salvation. And, if so, then one would have to curiously ask why I would even want to take it away, at all. However, and despite it being ordained by God once upon a time, I'm personally not seeing it as necessary for our modern day and age. I, therefore, ask for patience as I present my case, whilst trying to anticipate every question that may arise from such a thought. So, with that, I will begin with the most relevant of biblical verses; which, I'll quote, and then add some thoughts to them:

1 Corinthians 1:13-17

Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul? I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas: besides, I know not whether I baptized any other. For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel: not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

Certainly, Paul had said some pretty strong words here; and, with several read-throughs, one could *possibly* come to the conclusion that Paul, the overseer of the Gentile Church, was not baptizing the Gentile converts in natural water. Or, that he had begun to do so at the beginning of his ministry, but then mysteriously dropped that ordinance later on. And, if that's really the case, and if not he, then just who was baptizing the Gentile converts?

Certainly, many commentators are quick to help us with such problems, which many conclude that it was only the Church at Corinth that he was too happy not to service with baptisms anymore, and that men of lesser gifts would then take it over for the glory of the Kingdom. However, on the other hand (and, as I hope to show herein), I'm actually seeing a man here who, as I've said, was at first baptizing folks in natural water, but then began to, not only wean off, but to stop doing it altogether . . . Now, one can surely conclude that he did indeed delegate the water baptisms to his own disciples; though, that would actually be impossible to prove scripturally – lest one was to believe that water baptism is actually necessary to salvation, and would be forced to so say in order to prove it. But the scriptures are actually silent on that score.

We know that there are at least three biblical baptisms (*Spirit, natural Water, and Fire* – **Matthew 3:11**); and, some, even adding a fourth (*into Death* – **Romans 6:3**); or, even a fifth (*into God's Word* – **Ephesians 5:26**).^{*1} But, then, Paul very cleverly says, elsewhere, that there's actually only one:

Ephesians 4:4-6

*There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are 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.*

What can we conclude from this? That there's really at least three main baptisms (*water, Spirit, and fire: **Matthew 3:11***), and that they all are *summed-up* into one? Well, if we say that, then we might have to also say (and, according to **Ephesians 4:4-6**) that there's also *three bodies, three Spirits, three hopes, three Lords, three faiths, and three Fathers*. Which, the calculations would get very sloppy, and there would never be an end of way-side doctrines; because, in all actuality, we should really read "one" as to being only "one." But, if so, does that really make any sense doctrinally? Could it actually be possible to conclude from Paul's words here that there's only one baptism that's necessary for salvation? And, if that's the case, then which one should it be? *Spirit? Water? Fire? Death? Or, even, into the Word?*^{*2}

Going back to Paul's words in 1st Corinthians chapter one, let's consider some of his strange statements therein; such as:

1 Corinthians 1:14a

I thank God that I baptized none of you...

Again, many commentators will say that Paul's reaction here only meant that he wouldn't baptize another person in the Corinth Church because they weren't being nice about things; or, that he simply began delegating the water baptisms to his own disciples. And, yet, neither of those explanations can actually work because, first of all, it wasn't just the Corinth Church that he stopped Baptizing in; but, by his own words, he stopped water baptizing altogether:

1 Corinthians 1:17a

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel...

Then, he admitted that through his ministry (which, by the time he wrote this letter, he was already in by at least 10 years) that he only baptized two men and one household:

1 Corinthians 1:14-16

I thank God that I baptized none of you, but **Crispus** and **Gaius**; Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also **the household of Stephanas**: besides, **I know not whether I baptized any other**.

However, it could be possible, as one could argue, that he meant, with those statements, that he only baptized a few folks in Corinth, but did not mean throughout his entire ministry. Also, and as Paul continues his dialog in **1st Corinthians 1:17a**, he could have meant that God didn't send him to *Corinth* to baptize, but only to preach the Gospel there – again, having nothing to do with his entire ministry, but only meaning Corinth. So, therefore, we need to analyze those thoughts quickly before we can move on, for they are of extreme importance in this study.

John Gill's Exposition of the Bible [Published in 1748-1763; 1809; public domain]... *Crispus and Gaius . . . The former of these [Gaius] was the chief ruler of the Jewish synagogue at Corinth, who hearing the apostle, and believing in Christ, was baptized by him, Acts 18:8; and the latter was a very liberal and hospitable man, and was the apostle's host, whilst he was at Corinth.*

Romans 16:23a

Gaius mine host, and of the whole church, saluteth you...

Acts 18:8

And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; **and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.**

Again, *quickly*, let me say that we know, indeed, that Paul himself baptized Crispus and Gaius, but not any other in that group at Corinth (i.e. as we may consider otherwise from the end of verse 8 of Acts chapter 18: "...and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized"). Even if one were to conclude that by he simply saying Crispus only (in 1st Corinthians), that it actually meant his entire household was water baptized by Paul (especially since **Acts 18:8** said that Crispus, *along with all of his house*, had believed) – I'd have to actually disagree with that assessment (that is, that Paul had not only baptized Crispus, but, also, his entire household); for, in the verses that we just went over (14-16 of 1st Corinthians chapter 1), Paul did not hesitate to call-out the entire household of Stephanas as to being water baptized by him, which gave Paul ample opportunity to speak the same about Crispus' and Gaius' households. But, since he didn't, it shows us that it's entirely impossible to prove that Paul had baptized any other person from those two verses in 1st Corinthians.

However, one of the problems with scripture is that they're not always detailed. Even though speaking the absolute truth, they lack substance at times to make solid cases on historical matters; and, that's certainly because the books/letters therein were not actually meant to be strictly history books, but were details concerning the Gospel of Jesus Christ through the ministries of his apostles and disciples (*which certainly includes Jesus' own activities in the four Gospel accounts, too*). Therefore, we are left guessing at many turns . . . We could look upon the latter part of verse 8, of Acts 18 ("*and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized*"), in several ways; either 1) Paul was mistaken on how many folks he baptized in either Corinth or anywhere else; 2) Some of those men (his own disciples) who followed him around on his missions, had baptized the rest into water; 3) the baptism that the "others" in Corinth were baptized with, despite Crispus and Gaius being so baptized into water, wasn't in natural water but by the Holy Spirit instead; and 4) this statement was just an assessment of what had happened *later-on*, after the church was established, after Paul's departure, following-on during the course of the months and years afterwards. That is, just a statement that all the others eventually got baptized later, giving legitimacy to Paul's claim that he baptized no other person in Corinth; for, even if his personal disciples did it in his stead, then it would still have been done in Paul's name – since they were his students (*as I'll explore further, later-on, below*) . . . However, and despite all that, I do want to make the case for the household of Stephanas, of whom Paul also recollects that he baptized into natural water,

that Stephanas' household wasn't at Corinth when he and his household were baptized, as were Gaius and Crispus; and, that when Paul baptized the folks in Stephanas' home, that it had nothing to do with the baptisms at the church of Corinth.

1 Corinthians 16:15

I beseech you, brethren, (ye know the house of Stephanas, that **it is the firstfruits of Achaia**, and *that* they have addicted themselves to the ministry of the saints).

That is, despite the fact that Stephanas had eventually made his way on over to Corinth later-on to help that church:

1 Corinthians 16:17

I am glad of the **coming** of Stephanas [FROM Achaia] and Fortunatus and Achaicus: for that which was lacking on your part they have supplied.

For, as we had just seen in verse 15, the household of Stephanas was the firstfruits of *Achaia*, not Corinth; of which city (that is, Achaia), and according to Google maps – and, bearing the modern name of *Achaea* – is a little over 30 miles away from Corinth – which, and even though, today, one could, by car, reach within only two hours, by foot, *as they had walked from place to place back then*, would have taken a lot, lot longer to reach;*³ and, in turn, showing us that Paul was not only naming folks in Corinth that he baptized into water.*⁴ This helps us to understand that when Paul was naming the only people that he had ever baptized into natural water, that it covered more of his ministry than just at Corinth. *Why?* Because, he was adamant that God didn't send him to baptize (not just to Corinth, but for his entire ministry in general); for, he was not called or sent to do so . . . Let's see this again:

1 Corinthians 1:17a

For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to preach the gospel...

So then, the question has to arise of why he even water baptized at all. That's a question that I'll answer later herein as well. I really need to build my case a bit more before moving on to those deeper thoughts . . . We, therefore, have to conclude that Paul was absolutely correct with his memory of how many folks he baptized into water...

1 Corinthians 1:16b

...I know not whether I baptized any other.

...or consider that the head of the Gentile church was simply kidding himself with a bad memory (*which would be terrible for one who held such a high position for Christ*), for we are faced with a problem right off the bat in that many say that he, indeed, baptized others in water, too; because, we cannot forget about the 12 disciples in Ephesus that he had baptized "outside" of Corinth:

Acts 19:1-7

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts **came to Ephesus**: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have

ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. [5] **When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** [6] **And when Paul had laid *his* hands upon them, the Holy Ghost came on them; and they spake with tongues, and prophesied.** And all the men were about twelve.

Most people, when they get to verse 5, will say that before they spoke in tongues, Paul had quickly baptized them into natural water first. But, can that really be the case, even if this ancient phraseology makes it *appear* to be so? . . . However, there are a few things wrong with that assessment. Firstly, and as I had already pointed out, these 12 disciples weren't even mentioned by Paul in the Corinthians letter – only Crispus and Gaius (in Corinth), and the household of Stephanas (in Achaia). Secondly, the initial question of Paul to those men had nothing to do with water baptism, but of the Holy Ghost. Why would he therefore divert from the main topic at hand and do something other than what he was asking of them? That would be like me asking somebody if they had tried a certain shampoo brand, and they not having known about it beforehand, I ended up handing them, in response, a bar of bath soap instead; a total contradiction. And, lastly, with how these verses read (*again, ancient Greek transcribed into old AD 1611 English*), we could either come up with the conclusion that he did, indeed, baptize these disciples into natural water before praying them through to the Holy Ghost, or that verse 5 simply said that they were baptized (*in the Holy Ghost, not water*), and that verse 6 explained how it was done – by he laying hands on them. After all, the natural water and the Spirit of God both hold the term “baptism” with their actions; and, that specific scripture didn't clearly specify (*that is, in verse 5*) that it spoke of either natural water or of Spirit*⁵ . . . Not only, but the Bible is no stranger at telling how something is done, and then, afterwards, giving the details. Take, for instance:

Genesis 1:1

In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.

This verse tells us what God's plans were, and then the rest of the chapter explained how they were created. Now, that may seem a far-stretch for a modern audience, but just because it's strange for us doesn't mean that that's not how the ancients spoke or wrote. In fact, and in another set of verses (again in the book/letter of Acts – *and, even concerning baptism once more*), we catch more similarities:

Acts 9:17-18

[17] And Ananias went his way, and entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul [i.e. the future apostle Paul], the Lord, *even* Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. [18] And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

As many folks believe, verse 18 explains how Ananias baptized Paul into natural water “... and arose, and was baptized.” But, of course, that’s not how I’m reading it; for, neither did Saul (Paul) get baptized twice in these set of verses, nor even had received his sight twice-over, either . . . *What do I mean?* . . . Well, at the end of verse 17, we see that Ananias had only *told* Paul what was going to happen (in both the gaining of his sight back, and of the gaining of the Holy Ghost), but that it wasn’t the very *action* of those two things, which came *secondly* in verse 18 – just as it was the case, and as I see it, for **Acts 19:5-6**, in concerning those disciples in Ephesus . . . So, and concerning Paul and Ananias, let’s see this again, as I emphasize:

Acts 9:17c-18

[17] ...that thou mightest RECEIVE THY SIGHT [the 1st gift], and BE FILLED WITH THE HOLY GHOST [the 2nd gift – as these were only the *pronouncements* of them]. [then, in verse 18] And immediately THERE FELL FROM HIS EYES AS IT HAD BEEN SCALES: AND HE RECEIVED SIGHT FORTHWITH [the 1st gift now received], and arose, and [then] WAS BAPTIZED [into the Holy Ghost, as was so promised in verse 17c, the 2nd gift then received].

Why is this a hard notion to believe? That we can see that the thing was announced firstly, and then actually done secondly? For, if we can but see that this as an actuality, then what had happened in **Acts 19:5-6** (again, with those 12 disciples) can also be a reality, in that it was simply told of what was going to happen, and then, afterwards, explained the actual action of it being done. And, not only, but it would further support the documented fact that Paul had, indeed, only baptized a few folks in literal water, which did not include those 12 disciples at Ephesus.

However, and even so, another argument which could be put forward against my conclusions concerning them is that, in biblical chronology, Paul could have said that he baptized no other person BEFORE he ever met those 12 disciples. Meaning, specifically, that he could have written those words before even meeting them, giving proof that he did baptize other people *after* he had said those words in 1st Corinthians . . . However, not only would that go against Paul’s statement that God did not send him to baptize (**1st Corinthians 1:17a**), but it may be impossible to really determine the exact dates of those two events (*i.e. of Paul “baptizing” those other men, and of when he actually wrote the letter of 1st Corinthians*) – seeing as scholars (though “close” to each other in their determining) have differing dates as to when these two incidences occurred (*especially since no dates were written in Paul’s or Luke’s letters*); though, I am not saying that a somewhat accurate determining is totally impossible.

<https://www.gotquestions.org/receive-Spirit-Acts-19.html>: During Paul’s THIRD MISSIONARY JOURNEY, he encountered some men who are described as “disciples” who had not yet received the Holy Spirit.

When was Paul’s third missionary journey taken?

<https://dwellcc.org/learning/essays/chronological-study-pauls-ministry#>: Paul started his 3rd Missionary Journey in the spring of AD 52...

<http://www.about-jesus.org/paul-third-missionary-journey-map.htm>: Paul's 3rd missionary journey took place **between 54 AD and 58 AD** [i.e. beginning in AD 54].

<https://www.ccel.org/bible/phillips/CPn05Acts18.htm>: Paul's Third Missionary Journey, returning to Asia Minor and Greece circa **AD 53-58** [i.e. beginning in AD 53].

That is, it begun sometime, according to historians, between AD 52 and AD 54, and had ended in and around AD 58, or 57 as some other websites declare ... *When did he write 1st Corinthians?*

<https://www.britannica.com/topic/The-Letter-of-Paul-to-the-Corinthians>: *The First Letter of Paul to the Corinthians, probably written about 53–54 at Ephesus.*

Does this, therefore, prove that Paul had baptized those disciples AFTER he said he baptized no other person in his first letter to the Corinthians? ... Well, others, actually, give differing dates on this as well:

<https://www.esv.org/resources/esv-global-study-bible/introduction-to-1-corinthians/>: *The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the Corinthian church in the spring of A.D. 53, 54, or 55. This was near **the end** of his three-year ministry in Ephesus.*

Again, we have differing dates being presented, making us still wonder if Paul had met those men before or after he wrote that letter (*which both incidences happened at his stay in Ephesus*). However, this last quoted website gives us another clue in that Paul probably wrote this letter near the *end* of this approximate 3-year ministry at Ephesus; and, in the book/letter of Acts, we see that Paul probably “baptized” those disciples near the *beginning* of his stay there – or, so it seems by Acts’ descriptions:

Acts 19:1-2a

And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?

And, if this is so (that is, again, that it appears that he had met them near the beginning of his ministry at Ephesus), and though the dates of his third missionary journey (and, indeed, his arrival into Ephesus) are “close” to the time that he had written this epistle to the Corinthians, we are possibly seeing a chronology of he, indeed, having met those disciples *before* he wrote the letter – giving further legitimacy to the claim that he did not baptize those men in natural water; but, instead, by the Holy Ghost. In fact, and since all these dates are in such close proximity with each other, he wouldn’t have had time to forget such things had his experience with those disciples, instead, had been done some 10 or 20 years earlier.

<http://christianityinview.com/paulstimeline.html> AD 54: Third Missionary Journey – goes to Ephesus ... AD 55-56: At Ephesus ... AD 57: Spring: writes 1st Corinthians.

In a book, entitled “*Paul: an illustrated documentary*,” by John Drane (Harper & Row Publishers, 1976, and on page 78), the author sadly admits to how difficult it truly is to give a precise location in history for the 1st Corinthians letter; saying that it, along with 2nd Corinthians, “*confront us with one of the most complicated historical puzzles of the entire New Testament.*” Then, the author admits that at least Galatians, along with 1st and 2nd Thessalonians, are fairly easy to fit into the picture of Paul’s activities recorded in Acts – but, not so for the Corinthians’ letters: “*In order to piece together the historical situation behind this correspondence, we depend entirely on the vague hints and allusions which Paul made as he wrote [those letters].*” He then further concludes that “*any reconstruction of what was going on, must be more or less imaginative*” . . . However, all that has to do with his dealings with the Corinthian church itself, of which he dealt with, *long distantly*, from Ephesus, during his several years stay there. So, what this information tells us is that it’s really anybody’s guess as to when those letters were written – something that currently concerns us in determining if he had written at least 1st Corinthians before or after his meeting with those disciples . . . On a detailed website concerning Paul’s ministering chronology (at [https:// eyewitnessbible.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Ref-2-Paul-Chronology.pdf](https://eyewitnessbible.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Ref-2-Paul-Chronology.pdf)), it paints yet another picture that 1st Corinthians was written near the end of his stay at Ephesus (which seems to be a common theme in a lot of websites’ chronology of Paul’s ministry); which, if true, shows us, again, that Paul may have “baptized” those disciples before he wrote the letter; of which activity, once more, may have been closer to when he first arrived at Ephesus . . . Not only, but that same website only gives the distance of 2 years in between when Paul was physically at Corinth (and, of when he had water baptized Crispus there) and of his arrival in Ephesus to meet those disciples. Therefore, if Paul could remember baptizing Crispus, approximately 2 years prior to arriving in Ephesus, then why couldn’t he remember baptizing those disciples when he had arrived into Ephesus 2 years later – closer, actually, to when he wrote 1st Corinthians?

1 Corinthians 1:16b

...I know not whether I [water] baptized any other.

Therefore, and even though we cannot pinpoint specific dates for these two events (*Paul’s dealings with those disciples, and of when Paul wrote 1st Corinthians*), it seems more likely, with the clues at hand, that Paul, indeed, had dealt with those men before he wrote the words which described his ministry as to being an extreme limitation on water baptisms; and, to where he had ample opportunity of naming those men amongst the others, of Corinth and Achaia, of people he had water baptized . . . Therefore, if my theories are correct concerning the “baptism” of those disciples coming first, and then the letter of 1st Corinthians being written second, then this only further proves that Paul did not baptize those men in natural water, but only with the Holy Spirit; because, he again admitted that he could only recall two men and one household of whom he did water baptize (**1st Corinthians 1:14-17**).

We, too, can take into consideration about a set of scripture that I will be reviewing in detail later on concerning Peter's travel on over to a Gentile's home; and that before Peter could even mention to them about water baptism (*which, by the way, he finally did get around to*), that all of those Gentiles started speaking in Tongues whilst he was yet preaching to them – showing us that it didn't take the "step" of natural water baptizing first before Spirit Baptism could come onto folks, as many believe. Of which situation could cause us to ask an obvious question, of: "*Even if somebody spoke in tongues, with the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, but never did get water baptized, could they still make it to Heaven?*" . . . For those who really believe that water baptism is necessary for salvation, they would have to answer "*no*," that they could not get into Heaven even if they got Baptized into the Spirit of God if the natural water was never involved. For, even if you do believe water baptism is a necessary step, but say contrariwise that if somebody got the Baptism of the Holy Ghost, but never got water baptized, and that they could still go to Heaven anyways, then it's my estimation that you are contradicting yourself in saying that water baptism is still necessary for salvation.

But, even so, at the end of the day, it really doesn't matter if Paul baptized in water those 12 disciples or not. *Why?* Because, he still declared in 1st Corinthians that there was an extreme limitation of those of whom he actually baptized into water over the course of his ministry . . . But, still, and even so, one begins to wonder (in, again, our reference to **Acts 19:1-7**) if Paul actually did throw those guys into natural water before laying hands on them to receive the Holy Ghost by speaking in Tongues (or, rather, that one must seriously question Paul on that action if he really did do so), because we have to ask another obvious question: "*Wasn't the water baptism of John the Baptist good enough for them?*"*6 That is, being their first step before being Baptized into the Holy Ghost. Honestly, why did they even need rebaptizing once again into natural water? Well, I have heard it said that the baptism by John into water became of none effect in the New Testament World (i.e. after the *Day of Pentecost*), and that everybody who was so baptized by him (or, even, by any of his disciples – i.e. *whether personally conducted by John himself or not*) had to be rebaptized into water once again (*which, in all honesty, would have made John's calling to be absolute vanity for those folks of the 1st century!*); but, to say the words, whilst doing it this second time around: "*I baptize you **in the name of Jesus**.*" And, that's despite the Bible never saying such a thing. That is, the Bible does not specify that after we are baptized into natural water at one time, that we have to be rebaptized into natural water once again if we feel that it did not take hold correctly; and, then, to add better "wording" to the action. And, neither did the Bible specify that John's water baptism came of no effect after the *Day of Pentecost*. That's a complete assumption!

However, and more importantly, we still have to ask the question of why Paul stopped baptizing people into natural water altogether. And, of whether or not he had delegated that practice on to his own disciples. I mean, what really stopped Paul from continuing it himself? After all, the apostles from Jerusalem (those who sat under Jesus during the Lord's earthen ministry) were still doing it themselves – even after the *Day of Pentecost* . . . Even if we can say that Paul had decided to delegate it to his personal disciples, then why make a harsh statement, as he had done in verse 14a of 1st Corinthians, to begin with? "*I thank God that I baptized none of you!*" I see this subject actually digging much deeper than what it has been credited for; and, we just can't simply dismiss it with a quick wave

of the hand. So, therefore, let's jump up a few more verses and see if we can form a better picture:

1 Corinthians 1:11-13

For it hath been declared unto me of you, my brethren, by them *which are of the house of Chloe*, that there are contentions among you. Now this I say, that every one of you saith, I am of Paul; and I of Apollos; and I of Cephas [Peter]; and I of Christ. Is Christ divided? was Paul crucified for you? or were ye baptized in the name of Paul?

There were certainly “cliques”^{*7} being formed in the Early Church, and folks were placing themselves underneath different leaderships (*much the same way people form and join churches these days*); and, Paul was telling all of them that they were all supposed to be under Christ alone, and not any man.^{*8} Let's notice, therefore, what he said further about water baptism to make that picture complete:

1 Corinthians 1:14-15

I thank God that I baptized none of you, but Crispus and Gaius; **Lest** [and, here's the real reason why he stopped water baptizing] **any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.**

Well, this statement may actually be confusing: “*Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name!*” Afterall, if water baptism is really necessary for salvation, then why make this an excuse to stop baptizing? *How many people, I wonder – if it were necessary for salvation – would then miss out on salvation if everybody just stopped doing it?* And, besides, if Paul stopped doing it for the reason that it would attach his name to it, wouldn't that be the case for any disciple of his that would begin doing it themselves, too? Even if it weren't in their own personal name, it would still be credited to Paul since they were his disciples and students (much in the same way that water baptism attached itself to John's name – as we had seen from our passages in **Acts 19:1-7** when speaking of the *baptism of John*); for, water baptism (as we'll continue to see) has always had a man's name attached to it. Or, I should say, rather, that there's always a name associated with baptism – no matter the kind of baptism that it is . . . Let's see this once again:

Acts 19:3

And he [Paul] said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto **JOHN'S** baptism.

And, a bit later on, in another chapter, we'll actually see yet another man's name attached to water baptism in scripture. That is, other than Jesus' and John's names . . . It must be admitted to (and, as I'll also cover with a bit more detail in a few moments), by the disciples of Jesus, over at Jerusalem, baptizing folks into natural water, the credit (just like it would have gone to Paul) would be given on over to Jesus, their leader and teacher – justifying them, therefore, in saying that they were baptizing in the name of Jesus. But, that still doesn't work for Paul, though, because Paul wasn't Jesus (and, neither was Paul an original disciple of Jesus whilst Jesus had His earthen ministry^{*9}); therefore, if Paul's disciples had water baptized in Paul's stead (that is, baptizing the Gentile converts), wouldn't they be doing it in Jesus' name, too, just like the apostles were still doing in

Jerusalem?*¹⁰ Actually *no*, because Paul gained an understanding of what was to come in his near future (*i.e. at AD 70 – stay tuned for that explanation, too!*), for there was to be a huge prophecy to be fulfilled within that approaching year that would change *everything* in God’s Kingdom; and (again, as we’ll see), any baptizing in water after that date would *not* have Jesus’ name attached anymore. Not only, but as I’m also fixing to point out, the ministry committed unto Paul was not the same ministry committed to the 12 apostles in Jerusalem; and, when we find out just exactly what that was (that is, Paul’s commission), then we’ll learn with absolute assurance of why Paul knew to stop baptizing in water (*as well as his own disciples, too*), and of why the apostles in Jerusalem weren’t given that knowledge by Jesus when He was yet with them on earth . . . But, if all of what I say is true – *including those things that I’m fixing to cover* – then we’ll discover, without a doubt, that baptizing folks in water today would only be baptizing into a man’s name rather than in Jesus’ name; or, and much rather, into a denomination’s name – just as Paul had suggested with his own words in **1st Corinthians 1:15** “Lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name.” That is, folks today would be baptized into a modern denominational name which was not in existence during the 1st century AD . . . Would that mean, then, that if we baptize a person in water today that we are doing it in “John’s” name? *No*; but, they will be baptizing into their own name – just exactly what Paul had feared for himself. And, if so, then why do you think that men will sometimes *rebaptize* folks in water *into their church* if the person had just left a different sort of denomination than what they are currently finding themselves in? And yet, it’ll be said, whilst doing it, that they are NOW being baptized into the name of Jesus – making their last baptism (which was *also* in the name of Jesus) of none-effect; which in and of itself is very strange; for, as we’ll see in just a moment, in the “complete” New Testament world (*i.e. “after” AD 70, that is*), Jesus’ name was no longer associated with water baptism – a baptism, *we must understand*, that ONLY the direct disciples of Jesus (the 12 apostles of Jerusalem) could legitimately claim as the baptism of Jesus Christ. John the Baptist himself sets us straight on this score; for, his words are a futuristic prophecy for the World that was soon to come – *that is, after a 40-year period of when he had said what I’m about to quote*; Of what, again, would come to pass by AD 70.

Matthew 3:11 (*quoting from circa AD 30*)

I indeed baptize you with [natural] **water** unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: **he shall baptize you [instead] with the Holy Ghost, and with fire.**

Again, we’ll learn in a moment of why I didn’t say that John the Baptist had prophesied of what was to come on the *Day of Pentecost* (which was not too long-off from his own time); for, even though that’s “technically” true, the “*fullness*” of his statement wouldn’t come about (*just as I’ve already said*) until AD 70, and just after a very significant, destructive event . . . However, and as we should notice with John the Baptist’s words, he didn’t say that Jesus would *rebaptize* us in natural water into His name, he said that Jesus will baptize us with a different sort of baptism than his. Rather than in natural water (which the natural water was merely a *symbolism* of “true” baptism), it’ll be in Spirit, and with Fire. Because, Spirit and Fire was never John’s Baptism – much the same that Jesus’ baptism is not supposed to be in natural water either . . . But, one can argue, though, on three points:

1) *Jesus' disciples were baptizing in water while Jesus was still with them;*

2) *Jesus Himself was baptized in water by John;*

and, lastly:

3) *Jesus commissioned the 12 disciples to baptize in natural water for their own missions.*

These three points, many will say, could prove all my theories to be completely wrong. So, let's speak on them – of which topics will actually last through several chapters herein, for there is much to say . . . Firstly, while it is true that Jesus' disciples were baptizing in water (and, even continued to do so after Jesus' ascension), the Bible specifically says that Jesus never did so Himself (*which, is very important for us to understand*):

John 4:2

Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples.

Which, as I've said, water baptism is not His specific baptism; therefore, and even though His own disciples did so themselves throughout their own ministry, it eventually (as, once more, we'll see in a moment) faded away as to being associated with His name. And, if that's true, then connecting water baptism with Jesus' name today cannot be a biblical exercise. As Paul actually stressed in **1st Corinthians 1:15**, that, if he were to continue the practice of it himself (as well as delegating it to his own disciples), then the act would automatically attach itself to his own name . . . But, even so, let's continue to speak on the other points that I had brought up; but, before continuing with the disciple's own practicing of that act after the *Day of Pentecost*, let's first speak on Jesus having John baptize Him . . . Believe it or not, the reason is rather simple; and, neither does this reason prove that it's a sure-fire sign that we must do so in our own modern times. Jesus, believe it or not, was actually baptized during the Old Testament, and not during the New Testament. Despite our modern Bible declaring, just before the book of Matthew, that we are about to read the New Testament, the New Testament didn't actually commence (or, that is, *officially* commence) until after Jesus had died on the cross; then, after that, it commenced for the rest of us on the *Day of Pentecost*:

Hebrews 9:16-17

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.**

Also, and in another place, Paul confirms the Old Testament existence of Jesus whilst on earth:

Galatians 4:4

But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son [to the earth, for an earthen ministry], made of a woman, **made under the law.**

That is, made under the *Old Testament* Law; or, as it's also called, the Mosaic Law . . . So saying, the New Testament did not officially begin until after He had died on the cross. Therefore, Jesus was baptized into natural water – not during the New Testament – but, during the Old. *So, does that make a difference?* I actually think that it makes a huge difference. Jesus came to *close-out* the Old Testament (of which commission He passed-on to His 12 disciples in Jerusalem to continue to do); so, the only way that He could close it out was to *fulfil* the Old Law – *along with all of its ritualistic, fleshly ordinances* – else, they would truly still stand today.

Matthew 5:17 (*Jesus speaking*)

Think not that I am come to destroy the law, or the prophets: I am not come to destroy, **but to fulfil.**

Fulfil, Plēroō (play-ro'-o), G4137, from Strong's Greek Dictionary (*Strong's Hebrew & Greek Dictionaries were Published in 1890, and are public domain*): From G4134; to make replete, that is, (literally) to cram (a net), level up (a hollow), or (figuratively) to furnish (or imbue, diffuse, influence), satisfy, execute (an office), **finish (a period or task)**, verify (or coincide with a prediction), etc.: - **accomplish**, X after, (be) **complete**, **end**, **expire**, **fill (up)**, **fulfil**, **(be, make) full** (come), fully preach, perfect, supply.

Matthew 3:14-15

But John forbad him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee [i.e. in “Spirit” and not natural water – for, as we already saw, John himself declared that Jesus’ Baptism was by Spirit and Fire], and comest thou to me? [i.e. for “natural” baptism?] And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer *it to be so* now [i.e. until the end of the Old Testament; i.e. until heaven and earth passes – of which passing I’ll speak on in an upcoming chapter]: for thus it becometh us [that is, *now*, before the New Testament fully comes into existence] to **fulfil** [to “complete”] all [Old Testament] righteousness [so that the Old Testament can come to an end]. Then he suffered him [i.e. John then baptized him into natural water so that Jesus could fulfil the Old Law in His own life, and by performing that ritual to begin its closing-out process for the rest of us].

And, then, we see Jesus say that it’s all over with when He had died on the cross:

John 19:30

When Jesus therefore had received the vinegar, **he said, It is finished:** and he bowed his head, and gave up the ghost.

The ordinances (*which were “all” nailed to His cross – as we’re fixing to see in the scriptures*) were *any* and *all* fleshly rituals that were performed during the Old Testament by and with the members of the Outward Man body – as is so expressed by Paul:

Ephesians 2:15

Having abolished in his flesh [when Jesus had died on the cross] the enmity [an enemy], *even* [which were] the law of commandments **contained in ORDINANCES**; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace.

Not the Law itself – which is certainly one of the dictionary definitions for ordinance*¹¹ (*please see this very important Explanatory Note!*) – but, we are speaking of the Law that was *contained in ordinances*; that is, which were mixed-in with the Old Law; a contaminant that needed expulsion, for it became the enemy (enmity) of Jesus' New Gospel.

Colossians 2:14

Blotting out the **handwriting of ordinances** [i.e. written down in the Old Testament] that was against us [an enmity; an enemy], which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, **nailing it to his cross**.

But, now (and, before continuing with Paul's decision to pass-up the water baptism), let's briefly cover the heaven and earth passing away – *a 2,000 years ago event!* – so that we can definitely see how all the fleshly, naturalistic, ritualistic ordinances have totally vanished.

Explanatory Notes for Chapter 1 *Dismissing the Baptism of Natural Water*

***1. Into “death,” and into “God’s Word”...** Without trying to sound too complicated with all of these baptisms (and, there may be more that some folks can think of!), I will say that, ultimately, there are really only two kinds of baptisms (one is of nature [water baptism], the other is of Spirit [Holy Ghost Baptism]); and, that several of these mentioned “descriptions” of baptisms are simply describing only one – but, of which, has several types of descriptive words to describe that one ... What do I mean? ... Well, I believe that the baptism of “fire,” of “death,” and of “the Word,” are really three descriptions of Holy Ghost Baptism; because, that one Baptism simply has different ways to describe it, as it also has different functions to it. Not that all three will happen at the very same, exact time in a person's life, though, but that all of them are administered by the Holy Ghost at different times and stages of a person's walk with God during their lifetime here on earth ... First of all, God, through Jeremiah, admits that His “Word” is as a fire:

Jeremiah 23:29a

Is not my word like as a fire? saith the LORD...

Of which thought, ultimately, matches-up with the Baptism of the Word of God:

Ephesians 5:25-26

Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with **the washing of water by the word**.

Matches, how? In that God's Word is descriptive of both water (in Ephesians) and of fire (in Jeremiah). Yet, in these verses, we're not seeing "*natural*" water in Paul's words – such as is in the baptism of natural water – but, of "Spirit-water" instead.

John 7:37b-39a

...Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man thirst, let him come unto me, and drink. He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow **rivers of living water**. But this **spake he of the Spirit** [i.e. comparing the Holy Spirit with Living Waters]...

Isaiah 44:3

For I will pour **water** upon him that is thirsty, and **floods** upon the dry ground: I will pour **my spirit** [that same water] upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring.

1 Corinthians 12:13

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether *we be* Jews or Gentiles, whether *we be* bond or free; and have been all made to **drink into one Spirit**.

Giving both Baptisms (*fire and the Word*) a common denominator of God's Holy Spirit/Holy Ghost ... But, again, how? ... Well, once more, in Jeremiah, God's Word is comparable to a fire (of which Word we can be Baptized with – as John the Baptist mentions in **Matthew 3:11**); then, in Ephesians, God's Word is also comparable to water; a type of "spiritual" water that we can be "washed" with – a descriptive term (*being "washed"*) which is in cahoots with the term baptism. Therefore, the Word of God can actually cleanse us (wash us) in two different ways – by "fiery" trials (**1st Peter 4:12**), and of being healed in our minds and thoughts (**Psalms 107:20**) ... But, even so, what of the Baptism of death? Well, that, too, has a common denominator of the Holy Ghost:

Romans 6:3

Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were **baptized into his death**?

But, baptized, *how?* Into natural water? Or, into the Holy Ghost? Well, in order to answer that, we must continue with Paul's thoughts:

Romans 6:4-5

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. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness* of his resurrection.

Since when can natural water cause a spiritual resurrection? Natural water baptism, as I will continue to explain in the main part of this book, was for *repentance*, but not unto eternal life. But, even so, one could still wonder about the natural water baptism in this equation since Paul did say that it was only in the "*likeness*" of Jesus' resurrection. However, I will, herein, make this thought clearer; in that, and with assurity, Paul did, indeed, mean "Spirit" Baptism in these Roman references. But, and since I will explain all this more clearly later-on, I won't get deep with the thought just yet; for, in this first chapter, I am merely laying the immediate groundwork, which I will certainly build upon in the following pages ... But, even so, if we really do have a common denominator with all three of these descriptions (*fire, the Word, and death*), then how come not say, simply, "Spirit Baptism" in these scriptural references instead of these other terms? It's because

the Spirit of God itself has differing effects upon a Christian at a given time. It can certainly bury us (that is, kill the ungodly world's ways inside of us – *or, at least, and rather, to 'begin' that killing process*); it can birth us by God's Word (that is, when the Spirit of God becomes the "Spirit of Truth" – **John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13**; and **1st John 4:6**; and, too: **James 1:18** and **1st Peter 1:23**); and, it can burn our old man's ways as like with a fire (via His convicting Word); and/or God can also take us through fiery trials for our benefit and education through life experiences – which can also be fire baptism in its own right.

***2. Which one should it be? Spirit? Water? Fire? Death? Or, even, into the Word?...** This book concludes that Paul simply meant (in **Ephesians 4:4-6**) that there is only one baptism that's necessary for salvation; and, of course, that's the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. And, then, in the previous *Explanatory Note*, I had proceeded to explain that most of these other descriptions (but not natural water, of course!) are all describing a common baptism into that Holy Spirit. Therefore, only one of these baptisms is of natural origins, and that's the baptism into natural water – the only one of them that simply demonstrates, in natural symbolism, the truer baptism. Therefore, and in conclusion, the baptism that Paul describes as to being only one (*and, even though it has different functions during our walk with God upon this earth: "Death; Word; Fire"*) is that of God's Spirit and not natural water.

***3. As they had walked from place to place back then, would have taken a lot, lot longer to reach...** Google is very helpful for this sort of research. By simply typing in their search bar/engine: "*How far is Achaia from Corinth?*", it gives you the calculation of either 2 or 3 hours by car (depending, of course, of which route you want to take), and, also (by clicking the provided tab at the top of the map) 23 to 25 hours walking time. And, of course, Paul didn't own a car! So, if not travelling by sea, the early evangelists mainly travelled by foot from place to place.

Acts 20:13

And we went before to ship, and sailed unto Assos, there intending to take in Paul: for so had he appointed, minding himself **to go afoot**.

Albert Barnes Notes on the Bible (Published in 1847-85; public domain): *Choosing or preferring to go on foot. Most of his [Paul's] journeys were probably performed in this way.*

Jamieson, Fausset, and Brown Commentary (Published in 1871; public domain): *"Minding himself to go afoot" — "to go by land." In sailing southward from Troas to Assos, one has to round Cape Lectra, and keeping due east to run along the northern shore of the Gulf of Adramyttium, on which it lies. This is a sail of nearly forty miles; whereas by land, cutting right across, in a southeasterly direction, from sea to sea, by that excellent Roman road which then existed, the distance was scarcely more than half. The one way Paul wished his companions to take, while he himself, longing perhaps to enjoy a period of solitude, took the other, [then, finally] joining the ship, by appointment, at Assos.*

<https://www.thinkersbiblestudies.com/hall-of-tyrannus>: *Travel on the Roman roads was on foot except for government officials, commercial haulers, and the very rich who had their own chariots and carriages, or chartered seats on horse-drawn or ox-drawn transport coaches (like covered wagons with benches).*

But, of course, many believe that Paul did ride a horse around, seeing as he, *possibly*, rode a horse on the road to Damascus, since he fell down when he heard Jesus at last calling him:

Acts 9:3-5

And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: **And he fell to the earth**, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.*

Adam Clarke's Commentary on the Bible (Published in 1810-1826; public domain): *Being struck down with the lightning: many persons suppose he was on horseback, and painters thus represent him; but this is utterly without foundation. Painters are, in almost every case, wretched commentators.*

<https://www.baslibrary.org/bible-review/13/4/14>: Question: At this critical moment, when Paul was converted to Christianity, did he fall off a horse? ... Answer: It depends. If you are a Catholic, you think he fell off a horse. If you are a Protestant, you believe he was on foot and did not fall from a horse.

But, ironically, this following Catholic website admits to how much Paul did walk during his missions:

<https://catholic-church.lpages.co/missio-how-far-did-saint-paul-travel-by-foot/>: *Biblical scholars, by studying his routes as mentioned in the Bible, have calculated that Saint Paul travelled more than 10,000 miles – by foot! That's the equivalent of walking to and from New York to Los Angeles nearly four times!*

***4. Paul was not only naming folks in Corinth that he baptized into water...**

Another argument that could be forwarded against what I'm saying is that Corinth, under the leadership of Julius Caesar, in 44 BC, had become the capital of Achaia/Achaia (see: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Corinth-Greece>); thus, making those two "places" only one – hence, making the household of Stephanas a part of the Corinth church after all; and also, in turn, still making all of Paul's claims to ONLY be against Corinth concerning the water baptizing, and having nothing to do with his administration of that ritual in other cities ... However, even Paul makes a distinction between those two "cities" (*not as a single place*) when so mentioning that the household of Stephanas was, indeed, the firstfruits of Achaia, not Corinth – himself giving us this separation. For, even if Corinth was its capital, that still has nothing to do with what had happened in the separate city of Achaia, or of those folks who lived there ... Indeed, when I lived in Houston, Texas (*and, even though that city was in the same state as its capital Austin*), our church had nothing to do with any churches in Austin, though they are Christians, too. We were still a separate church, a separate group, and our activities were separate – even if all of our ultimate Christian goals are the same. This is the same for the two separate cities of Achaia and Corinth.

***5. That specific scripture didn't clearly specify that it spoke of either natural water or Spirit...** In fact, this is a common problem in the New Testament scriptures/letters, in that it can say, simply – most of the time – "*baptism*," but without specifying what the author was actually meaning by that single word (for either natural water or of Spirit; or, even of any other descriptive term, such as *fire baptism*, *Word baptism*, or etc.). Therefore, we have to use scriptural context and subject matter to help

us at a given time ... However, in my own experience and studies, I have found that a lot of times ministers will say “water baptism” very quickly when I had found “Spirit Baptism” was the sure meaning for certain scriptures, as we’ll continue to see as we plod along herein...

***6. Wasn’t the water baptism of John the Baptist good enough for them?...**

Concerning these “disciples,” there are mixed conclusions as to whom they actually were; in that they were either, indeed, John’s old disciples, or were baptized into John’s baptism by Apollos; or, *etc* ... I feel that this route, in trying to determine exactly whom they were (or, even of whom actually baptized them into natural water in John’s name), is not really necessary to explore for our current study, so I leave it to the reader’s discretion to think of whom these 12 men to have been ... But, once more, we are dealing with limited historical facts in the Biblical record for absolute conclusions.

***7. Cliques...** Though, perhaps, an informal expression, I found that it fit best in this description – especially when we consider the word’s definition. I will actually quote Wikipedia’s* definition for the benefit of this study:

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Clique>: A clique (klik), in the social sciences, is a group of individuals who interact with one another and share similar interests. Interacting with cliques is part of normative social development regardless of gender, ethnicity, or popularity. Although cliques are most commonly studied during adolescence and middle childhood development, they exist in all age groups. They are often bound together by shared social characteristics such as ethnicity and socioeconomic status. Examples of common or stereotypical adolescent cliques include athletes, nerds, and "outsiders". Typically, people in a clique will not have a completely open friend group and can, therefore, "ban" members if they do something considered unacceptable, such as talking to someone disliked. Some cliques tend to isolate themselves as a group and view themselves as superior to others, which can be demonstrated through bullying and other antisocial behaviors.

***Wikipedia, the online Encyclopedia...** I’d like to speak my mind quickly about the website *Wikipedia*, because in this book, as well as my others, I do make use of its wording. Allow me to say, first of all, that I do understand that it cannot be fully trusted 100%. *But, then again, what book or commentary by man can be totally trusted?* – Even some biblical translations have to be investigated before trust can come. However, and what’s really good about Wikipedia is the fact that it does give references from which information was taken. That’s where the usefulness of it comes – especially since anybody from anywhere can add information to any Wikipedia page. Not that that’s especially bad, it just means that all of us must stay on our toes to make sure we aren’t taken-in by false information. Therefore, when I refer my readers to this website, I am wishing for them to make use of the source material from which the information was gleaned. Besides, and since a large library of encyclopedias aren’t as popular today as they had been yesteryear, Wikipedia has become the king of encyclopedias! And, many people do make use of it on a daily basis. Therefore, it cannot be ignored or overlooked. Until something better comes along, we *can* make use of it – though being cautious in our endeavors – as well as being cautious with any other source material ... The same holds true for all the commentary quotes I make from other authors – such as my usage from commentators like *Adam Clarke; John Gill; Matthew Henry; John Wesley; Albert Barnes; etc.* – and, even from *Geneva’s Bible Translation Notes*, as well as Bible Dictionaries, such as *Smith’s* and

Easton's; even *Webster's Dictionary* and *Strong's Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek Dictionaries*. For, just because I occasionally quote them, that certainly does not mean that I agree to everything that they have to say in other places. I pick and choose what I'd like to share in my books; for, surely, if somebody has a great love for the Lord (as I see such men do), then they can't be all wrong in everything that they say; and, even if they can be wrong on occasion (according to *my* understanding, that is!), that does not mean they have everything wrong. Again, I see such men as to having the right intentions to begin with.

***8. They were all supposed to be under Christ alone, and not any man...** No, I am not saying that folks can't have ministers over them (at least during their own ministerial youth), I'm just saying that not one person should stand above any other as the supreme leader here on earth. All pastors are simply the "*under*"-shepherds but not *THE* Shepherd, as I believe Paul was trying to convey with these thoughts ... But, for my take on the Five-Fold Ministry, please refer to my book on that subject, called: *"The Church and the Five-Fold Ministry: Should we put our trust in man?"*

***9. And, neither was Paul an original disciple of Jesus whilst Jesus had His earthen ministry...** Even though Paul was not a disciple of Jesus during Jesus' earthen ministry, he certainly was a disciple/apostle of His nonetheless (**1st Corinthians 1:1**). And, since that is the case, then wouldn't he still be justified in doing the water baptisms since the Jerusalem apostles were still doing them? ... Well, first of all, Paul had boldly declared that he couldn't do such baptisms because it would have been done in his own name; so, that's a testimony that we *must* consider. But, instead of saying that he was wrong for thinking so, and that he shouldn't have shirked his responsibility for the Gentiles,* we, again, need to investigate this subject deeply before dismissing it with a nonchalant air ... As I'll continue building my case, herein, we'll begin to see that even though Paul was a disciple/apostle for Jesus, too, that it was a discipleship/apostleship from the "*risen*" Jesus rather than the Jesus who was ministering on earth, and in a fleshly man's body. That is, instead of learning what the others had learned from Jesus during His earthen ministry, Paul got caught up unto the Third Heaven to receive his training and instructions in a much more spiritual way (**2nd Corinthians 12:1-4**) ... *Does that therefore mean that there are two separate Jesus?* ... Nay! But, it does mean that the Jerusalem apostles had a separate, more "natural" mission given to them by Jesus, and that Paul was given a more "spiritual" mission. Missions, of which, I will definitely be explaining the differences of in the upcoming pages of this book; for, such a hypothesis is extremely relevant and important to the proper understanding of our current subject. And will, in turn, explain why Paul had finally and completely rejected the "natural" baptism in favor of "Spirit" baptism.

***He shouldn't have shirked his responsibility for the Gentiles...**

Indeed, and quite opposite to the commission given unto the Jerusalem disciples of Jesus, whilst Jesus was yet with them during His earthen ministry – and, as we read about that commission, here...

John 4:1b-2

...Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

...Paul was, himself, NOT sent to baptize by this same Jesus when He was personally discipled by Him in the *Third Heaven* (**2nd Corinthians 12:2**; **1st Corinthians 1:17**). This thought will clear itself up as we continue to plod along in this book...

***10. Wouldn't they be doing it in Jesus' name, too, just like the apostles were still doing in Jerusalem?...** We must not forget, with this thought, that if Paul had said that baptizing people into water would have been done in his own name, then that thought would have to pass onto any of his own disciples, too. Else, what Paul had said (again, that he would have done it in his own name) would make no sense at all; and, that he would only be kidding himself.

***11. Which is certainly one of the dictionary definitions for ordinance...** Of what I'm about to expound upon in this *Explanatory Note* for "ordinances" is a very important direction that this book needs to now take – and, beginning to do so here, at the end of chapter 1, is a very good starting point; for, and as we'll see, the learning of biblical "ordinances" is not only important for this current subject and topic, but it'll help us to understand water baptism and the communion in a more focused, revealing light . . . What's confusing for a lot of folks, though, is the word "ordinances" itself – *especially in its connection with water baptism and the communion*. For, in our dictionary meaning (just below), we can see that the main definition is simply a "*law*." But, that's not where the buck stops! In its *continued* entries, it actually gives us three different definitions of what kind of law that really is – *civil*; *ceremonial*; and *ecclesiastical*.

Ordinances, Dogma, G1378 [as is used in Ephesians 2:15a], from Strong's Greek Dictionary: From the base of G1380; a law (*civil, ceremonial or ecclesiastical*): - decree, ordinance.

And, according to **Webster's Dictionary** (Published in 1828; public domain):

"...a **civil law**, in a general sense, is the law of a state, city or country; an **ecclesiastical law** is an assembly or meeting pertaining or relating to the church; as ecclesiastical discipline or government; ecclesiastical affairs; and, a **ceremonial law** relates to ceremony, or external rite; ritual; according to the forms of established rites; as ceremonial exactness. It is particularly applied to the forms and rites of the Jewish religion; as the ceremonial law or worship, as distinguished from the moral and judicial law . . . And, **ceremonial** [in continuing Webster's definitions], is an Outward form; external rite, or established forms or rites, including all the forms prescribed; a system of rules and ceremonies, enjoined by law or established by custom, whether in religious worship, in social intercourse, or in the courts of princes."

In **Ephesians 2:15**, we can see plainly that Paul was NOT referring to the Law of Moses itself with his comments, but to the Law as it was contained (*or, wrapped-up tight*) in the ordinances. That is, *the rituals themselves*. And, of which ceremonies, he continued to say, had become God's enemy . . . *Did he?* . . . Let's see this again:

Ephesians 2:15a

Having abolished in his flesh [when He died on the cross] **THE ENMITY**, *even* [which were] the law of commandments **contained in ordinances**...

What's an enmity?

Enmity/Echthra (ekh'-thrah), G2189, Strong's Greek Dictionary: hostility; by implication a reason for **opposition**: - enmity, hatred.

You know, an enemy of God! . . . But, *why?* . . . Yes, we must ask why – especially since it was God Himself who had established such rituals in the Old Testament:

Exodus 18:20

And thou shalt teach them ordinances AND laws [showing a separation here of both the civil law and the ceremonial/ritual part of the law], and shalt shew them the way wherein they must walk, and the work [again, rituals] that they must do.

But, after a while of their usage (or, rather, of their *misusage*), Isaiah shows us how that God began to get sick and tired of those old rituals by his day and time:

Isaiah 1:11-15

To what purpose *is* the multitude of your sacrifices unto me? saith the LORD: I am full of the burnt offerings of rams, and the fat of fed beasts; and I delight not in the blood of bullocks, or of lambs, or of he goats. When ye come to appear before me, who hath required this at your hand, to tread my courts? Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; the new moons and sabbaths, the calling of assemblies, I cannot away with; *it is iniquity*, even the solemn meeting. Your new moons and your appointed feasts my soul hateth: they are a trouble unto me; I am weary to bear *them*. And when ye spread forth your hands, I will hide mine eyes from you: yea, when ye make many prayers, I will not hear: your hands are full of blood.

Again, *why?* Well, it was how the people were doing and performing them. Their hearts still remained unclean; they were going through the motions without them even meaning anything anymore; and instead of understanding that a sacrifice actually meant giving-up something that you love in this world to gain God, their understanding of a sacrifice was to just bring an animal to kill it every time they did something wrong. And, by doing so, they gained no understanding. So, the entire thing simply became God's enemy . . . In fact, we see Jesus' rage when dealing with those wretches in the Temple. *Can we imagine what he saw?* And, just for illustration, I'll give a ridiculous image for the reader to consider; but, surely, it went along the lines of...

"Get your doves and lambs for sacrificing here! Two doves for only a dollar and your sins will vanish! Step right up, folks!"

John 2:13-16

And the Jews' passover was at hand, and Jesus went up to Jerusalem, And found in the temple those that sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the changers of money sitting: And when he had made a scourge of small cords, he drove them all out of the temple, and the sheep, and the oxen; and poured out the changers' money, and overthrew the tables; And said unto them that sold doves, Take these things hence; make not my Father's house an house of merchandise.

And, it therefore became such a hassle to the user, and potential Christian, that it was Paul himself who had ended-up calling all such labors the enemy of God ... As for these "ordinances," and of what they all entail (*and, even, if we can today imply that we may still be guilty of doing any*), I will certainly get into that discussion during the course of this book. For, and as I had already said earlier, I am just beginning this journey with chapter 1, and will get into extreme details as we continue on.

END OF CHAPTER 1 ... This book is available at Amazon.com for purchase in both Paperback and Kindle Ebook: <https://www.amazon.com/Surprising-Dismissal-Water-Baptism-Communion-ebook/dp/BoCSLGDJSX> ... Or, just do a quick search on Amazon by using key words from this book's title.