

B A P T I S M

and the rules of implementation

A number of questions presented to the candidates of baptism before the congregation in the church are among others :

- (1) Do you believe that the Bible and all the Scriptures therein contain the Word of God ?
- (2) Do you believe that those inspired of God to have the Bible provided for us in writing are the prophets and the apostles ?
- (3) Do you believe that there is a gift of the Spirit of Prophecy with this Church of Seventh-day Adventist ?

These questions seemed to be so simple to answer, so that generally no single one of the candidates would have ever said, "I do not know." You and me have ever admitted before the audience by saying "Yes." And that is the reason why we are now members of this denomination of Seventh-day Adventist. However, when we would be willing to contemplate for a moment those questions as presented above by the pastors, then honestly speaking we are to admit that no one of us has ever answered honestly and right. Even most of the pastors themselves, who have submitted the questions to their candidates, were not as yet fully convinced of their true meanings.

We are now living in the history of the prophecy of Revelation 3 : 14 – 22. Due to the rejection of the message of the angel of Revelation 18 : 1 in Minneapolis Conference of 1888, then the General Conference of SDA and all its ministers in the world, would have by themselves proven to us the fulfillment of their lukewarm condition of the prophecy of Revelation 3 : 14 – 17. In their present spiritual condition of Luke warmness, either the ministers or their baptism candidates would no more be able to master the sure words of prophecy from the Old Testament prophets nor from John the Revelator. Even the so-called gift of the Spirit of Prophecy in the Church of Seventh-day Adventist, they were not familiar with. The consequence is that most of the ministers and their followers now believe in the Bible as the Word of God, not because they have all the Scriptures comprehended, but only due to the fact that the whole Christian world have first accepted the Bible as the authentic Word of God. Remember, that only the Protestant Denomination has in possession of the copy right to have the Bible translated into all the languages in the world up to this very time.

General Conference of SDA and the ministers, officially recognize Mrs. EG. White and her publications of the Spirit of Prophecy as the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy, not because they have fully understood and admired the message from the Lord, but just because of their amazement at several miraculous events when Mrs. White got the message in her visions from the Lord right in their presence.

We therefore, must be aware that though the General Conference and the ministers recognize the Bible and the gift of the Spirit of Prophecy as the Word of God, they in fact no more prioritize the Spirit of Prophecy to be taught among us in the churches. Such is the spiritual condition of our churches and this is to meet the fulfillment of the words of God in the following address :

*“The Lord does not now work to bring many souls into the truth, because of the church members who have never been converted and those who were once converted but who have backslidden. What influence would these unconsecrated members have on the new converts ? Would they not make of no effect the God-given message which His people are to bear ?” -- **6 Testimonies, p. 371***

“There are many ministers who have never been converted. They come to the prayer-meeting and pray the same old, lifeless prayers over and over; they preach the same dry discourses over and over, from week to week, and from month to month. They have nothing new and inspiring to present to their congregations, and it is evident that they are not eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of man, for they have no life in themChrist is not abiding in their hearts by faith.” --- **Review and Herald, vol.2, p. 337.**

There are many members, even the ministers who have never been converted. This is to prove that most of the baptism carried out up to now among us is not so much approved in heaven. They must try to have their baptism renewed.

What is Baptism ?

The servant of the Lord, Mrs. E. G. White said :

“The ordinances of baptism and the Lord’s Supper are two monumental pillars, one without and one within the church. Upon these ordinances Christ has inscribed the name of the true God.

“Christ has made baptism the sign of entrance to His spiritual kingdom. He has made this a positive condition with which all must comply who wish to be acknowledged as under the authority of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. Before man can find a home in the church, before passing the threshold of God’s spiritual kingdom, he is to receive the impress of the divine name, “The Lord our Righteousness.” **Jeremiah 23 : 6.**

“Baptism is a most solemn renunciation of the world. Those who are baptized in the threefold name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, at the very entrance of their Christian life declare publicly that they have forsaken the service of Satan and have become members of the royal family, children of the heavenly King. They have obeyed the command : “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, and touch not the unclean thing.” And to them is fulfilled the promise : “I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you, and ye shall be My sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” **2 Corinthians 6 : 17, 18 – 6 Testimonies for the Church, p. 91.**

Baptism is a sign of entrance or a sort of certificate of citizenship granted to someone to be a citizen of the Kingdom of God on earth. Through an inaugural ceremony of baptism our status will be changed from non citizenship into the citizenship of the Kingdom, or in other words, our status will be changed from the children of men unto the children of God. Thus it is, that the same baptism would be a public renunciation of the world in seriousness. To this end Mrs. White said :

“And the repentant believer, who takes the steps required in conversion, commemorates in his baptism the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. He goes down into the water in the likeness of Christ’s death and burial, and he is raised out of the water in the likeness of His resurrection.—not to take up the old life of sin, but to live a new life in Christ Jesus.” -- **EGW. Bible Commentary, vol. 5, p. 1113.**

It is now clear, that when the baptism is carried out honestly and right, then all sins taken with us, either hereditary or by self-creation, they all will be abolished and forgiven. “*These candidates have entered into the family of God, and their names are inscribed in the Lamb’s book of life.*”-- **EGW. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1075.**

Benefit from Jesus’ Baptism

“Then cometh Jesus from Galilee to Jordan unto John, to be baptized of him. But John forbad Him, saying, I have need to be baptized of thee, and comest thou to me? And Jesus answering said unto him, Suffer it to be so now : for thus it becometh us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he suffered Him.” — **Matthew 3 : 13 – 15.**

“Jesus did not receive baptism as a confession of guilt on His own account. He identified Himself with sinners, taking the steps that we are to take, and doing the

work that we must do. His life of suffering and patient endurance after His baptism was also an example to us.” -- **Desire of Ages, p. 111.**

It is clear that the baptism of Christ does not mean that He may receive a remission of sin, nor to get an entrance permit to the Kingdom, but just to give us an example that all the rules of implementation of the Law must be observed, either by the Law Giver Himself or by all the people as well. Thus is it how the Law must be observed by all sides.

Baptism of Children of the Household of God

“Never allow your children to suppose that they are not children of God until they are old enough to be baptized. Baptism does not make children Christians; neither does it convert them; it is but an outward sign, showing that they are sensible that they should be children of God by acknowledging that they believe in Jesus Christ as their Savior and will henceforth live for Christ.”-- **Child Guidance, p. 499.**

Citizenship status of children always follows the citizenship status of their parents, especially of the father. This rule applies first in the household of God’s people ever since the beginning. It means, this rule is binding in the spiritual kingdom of God on earth.

Likewise Jesus was baptized only to meet the requirement of the truth, then the children of the household of God on earth must also be baptized. They are baptized not for to change their citizenship status, but just for to confirm the truth of the Law.

But how is the citizenship of children, whose parents are themselves still lacking the status of citizenship of God’s Kingdom on earth. ? This is especially for those of whom the servant of the Lord said, “*have never been converted and those who were once converted but who have backslidden,*” (Testimonies, vol. 6, p. 371), and “*the ministers who have never been converted*” (Review and Herald, vol. 2, p. 337) Let us learn from the experience of the Jews in the time of John the Baptist.

Baptism of the Jews by John the Baptist

John is not only well-known as the Baptist, but as a prophet too, even the greatest of the prophets. He was categorized as one of the Old Testament prophets. To this end Matthew the apostle said : “*For all the prophets and the law*

prophesied until John.” Matthew 11 : 13. This is to prove that John is the last of the Old Testament prophets. He was imprisoned and later be killed before Jesus has accomplished His mission in 31.

During his life time the Christian Church was not yet established. Christian Church was first established by the Lord Jesus Himself as soon as after His baptism in the year 27. We need to know also that up to the year 31 after having accomplished His mission on earth, the Jews were still in possession of their status as the chosen people of the Lord. They had lost their status just at the end of the seventy weeks of the prophecy of Daniel 8 : 14, which fell in the year 34, marked by the death of Stephen, one of Jesus staunch followers at the time.

The rules for the ceremony of Baptism itself was first introduced by John. As a sign of entrance the function of Baptism is to build the Christian Church. Hence the Baptism would be granted to only those who could meet all the conditions for being God’s people in the history of the New Testament era.

On the contrary the Baptism ceremonial rule was not known in the Old Testament era. This could be understood, because the status of membership of God’s people during the Old Testament history was obtained only through the line of hereditary stock. It means, when the parents had first in possession of the status, then all their descendants would be automatically of the same status. The status of membership of God’s people during the Old Testament history belongs to only the Hebrews. And that is why they were well-known during the Old Testament history to be the chosen people of God.

The problem now is (1) why did John carry out the ceremonial Baptism, prior to the establishment of the Christian Church, whereas he himself was still an Old Testament prophet? (2) Why did the ceremonial Baptism be granted to the Jews, whereas they were still in possession of the status of God’s people? The servant of the Lord, Mrs. Ellen G. White said:

“John proclaimed the coming of Messiah, and called the people to repentance. As a symbol of cleansing from sin, he baptized them in the waters of Jordan. Thus by a significant object lesson he declared that those who claimed to be the chosen people of God were defiled by sin, and that without purification of heart and life they could have no part in the Messiah’s kingdom.” -- The Desire of Ages, p. 104.

The Spirit of Prophecy declared that the prophecy of Malachi 3 : 1 for the first time met its fulfillment in the time of John the Baptist. John has come to prepare the way for the first coming of Jesus. As a preparation for Jesus to establish the Christian Church John has introduced the inaugural ceremony of baptism as a sacred event.

Although as a chosen people of God, the Jews were still in the status of citizenship of Messiah kingdom, yet personally the most of them were fallen for a long time in sin. In short, most of them personally have lost their status as children of God. And that is the reason why, in preparing the way for the first coming of Messiah, John should have them called for their repentance. And for the remission of sin he baptized them in the waters of Jordan.

Preparation for the Baptism

Let us first look to how the Lord Jesus Himself has ever prepared Nicodemus, the great teacher in Israel, for his baptism. The servant of the Lord, Mrs. E.G. White said in the following words:

“When Nicodemus, a great teacher in Israel, came to Jesus, the Master laid before him the conditions of divine life, teaching him the very alphabet of conversion.” -- **6 Testimonies, p. 154.**

“In the interview with Nicodemus, Jesus unfolded the plan of salvation and His mission to the world. In none of His subsequent discourses did He explain so fully, step by step, the work necessary to be done in the hearts of all who would inherit the kingdom of heaven.” -- **The Desire of Ages, p. 176.**

“Raising His hand with solemn, quiet dignity, He pressed the truth home with greater assurance, “Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. Nicodemus knew that Christ here referred to water baptism and the renewing of the heart by the Spirit of God. He was convinced that he was in the presence of the One whom John the Baptist had foretold.” -- **The Desire of Ages, pp. 171, 172.**

In the time of Nicodemus the New Testament Scriptures were not as yet available. The prophecies of Daniel and the Revelation which related to the time of the end were not as yet revealed. Yet as long as those things revealed up to the time, those are the things taught to Nicodemus by the Lord, systematically as well as alphabetically from A up to Z.

At this time, in the time of the end now, according to the prophecy of Zachariah chapter 4, which has been revealed in our midst, let it be known that the whole Scriptures of the Bible have been interpreted into the so-called THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. Therefore, the completeness of the Truth at this time is not limited with the Old Testament Scriptures of the time of Nicodemus only, but also including the New Testament Scriptures as well and the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. Therefore the servant of the Lord said:

“We are nearing the end of this earth’s history, and the different lines of God’s work are to be carried forward with much more self-sacrifice than they have yet been. The work for these last days is a missionary work. Present truth, from the first letter of its alphabet to the last, means missionary effort.” -- **Counsels on Health, p. 300.**

Missionary effort in this time of the end is to teach the Bible fully according to all the interpretations thereof found in THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. Present truth from the first letter of its alphabet (A) up to the last (Z) means missionary effort. This is the missionary work for these last days. As well as how Jesus has prepared Nicodemus for his baptism, by teaching him the whole truth available at the time, we are to do the same to prepare the candidates for their baptism. Every candidate for baptism must be taught thoroughly, and they must also show their honesty to observe all things prior to the baptism. The servant of the Lord said:

“PREPARATION FOR BAPTISM

”There is need of a more thorough preparation on the part of the candidates for baptism. They are in need of more faithful instruction than has usually been given them. The principles of the Christian life should be made plain to those who have newly come to the truth. None can depend upon their profession of faith as proof that they have a saving connection with Christ. We are not only to say, “I believe,” but to practice the truth. It is by conformity to the will of God in our words, our deportment, and our character, that we prove our connection with Him. Whenever one renounces sin, which is the transgression of the law his life will be brought into conformity to the law, into perfect obedience. This is the work of the Holy Spirit. The light of the word carefully studied the voice of conscience, the strivings of the Spirit, and produce in the heart genuine love for Christ, who gave Himself a whole sacrifice to redeem the whole person, body, soul, and spirit. And love is manifested in obedience. The line of demarcation will be plain and distinct between those who love God and keep His commandments, and those who love Him not and disregard His precepts.

“Faithful Christian men and women should have an intense interest to bring the convicted soul to a correct knowledge of righteousness in Christ Jesus. If any have allowed the desire for selfish indulgence to become supreme in their life, the faithful believers should watch for these souls as they that must give an account. They must not neglect the faithful, tender, loving instruction so essential to the young converts that there may be no halfhearted work. The very first experience should be right.

“Satan does not want anyone to see the necessity of an entire surrender to God. When soul fails to make this surrender, sin is not forsaken; the appetites and passions are striving for the mastery; temptations confuse the conscience, so that true conversion does not take place. If all had a sense of the conflict which each soul must wage with satanic agencies that are seeking to ensnare, entice, and deceive, there would be much more diligent labor for those who are young in the faith.

“These souls, left to themselves, are often tempted and do not discern the evil of the temptation. Let them feel that it is their privilege to solicit counsel. Let them seek the society of those who can help them. Through association with those who love and fear God they will receive strength.”

“Our conversation with these souls should be of a spiritual, encouraging character. The Lord marks the conflicts of every weak, doubting, struggling one, and He will help all who call upon Him. They will see heaven open before them, and angels of God descending and ascending the ladder of shining brightness which they are trying to climb.”-- **6 Testimonies for the Church, p. 92 – 93.**

Dear Reader! The above quotation is under the topic, “Preparation for baptism.” If you could have read them more carefully, you will see that those newly converted ones must yet be under the guidance for a certain period prior to their baptism. That is the reason that the servant of the Lord said:

“Every opportunity, every advantage, every privilege, has been given to us to gain a rich Christian experience; but we do not learn everything all at once. There must be a growth. Many, having learned a little in school, think they are ready to graduate. They think they know about all that is worth knowing. We are not to think that as soon as we are baptized we are ready to graduate from the school of Christ.”-- **EGW. Bible Commentary, vol. 6, p. 1075.**

Parents' duty to prepare their children

“Parents whose children desire to be baptized have a work to do, both in self-examination and in giving faithful instruction to their children..... There should be no undue haste to receive the ordinance. Let both parents and children count the cost. In consenting to the baptism of their children, parents sacredly pledge themselves to be faithful stewards over these children, to guide them in their character building. They pledge themselves to guard with special interest these lambs of the flock, that they may not dishonor the faith the profess.

“Religious instruction should be given to children from their earliest years. It should be given, not in a condemnatory spirit, but in a cheerful, happy spirit. Mothers need to be on the watch constantly, lest temptation shall come to the children in such a form as not to be recognized by them. The parents are to guard their children with wise, pleasant instruction. As the very best friends of these young ones, they should help them in the work of overcoming, for it means everything to them to be victorious. They should consider that their own dear children who are seeking to do right are younger members of the Lord’s family, and they should feel an intense interest in helping them to make straight paths in the King’s highway of obedience. With loving interest they should teach them day by day what it means to be children of God and to yield the will in obedience to Him. Teach them that obedience to God involves obedience to their parents. This must be a daily, hourly work. Parents, watch, watch and pray, and make your children your companions.

“When the happiest period of their life has come, and they in their hearts love Jesus and wish to be baptized, then deal faithfully with them. Before they receive the ordinance, ask them if it is to be their first purpose in life to work for God. Then tell them how to begin. It is the first lessons that mean so much. In simplicity teach them how to do their first service for God. Make the work as easy to be understood as possible. Explain what it means to give up self to the Lord, to do just as His word directs, under the counsel of Christian parents.”

“After faithful labor, if you are satisfied that your children understand the meaning of conversion and baptism, and are truly converted, let them be baptized. But, I repeat, first of all prepare yourselves to act as faithful shepherds in guiding their inexperienced feet in the narrow way of obedience. God must work in the parents that they may give to their children a right example, in love, courtesy, and Christian humility, and in an entire giving of self to Christ. If you consent to the baptism of your children and then leave them to do as they choose, feeling no special duty to keep their feet in the straight path, you yourselves are responsible if the lose faith and courage and interest in the truth.” – **6 Testimonies, pp. 93 – 95.**

The parents mentioned above are those of the household of God. Hence the baptism received by the children is not necessary to change their status to be Christian, because they are basically Christian by birth. However, as they are children the parents must be responsible to the Lord to raise and keep them in the faith up to the time they reach their adult manhood.

The Pastor Work

“Candidates who have grown to manhood and womanhood should understand their duty better than do the younger ones; but the pastor of the church has a duty to do for these souls. Have they wrong habits and practices? It is the duty of the pastor to have special meetings with them. Give them Bible readings, converse and pray with them, and plainly show the claims of the Lord upon them. Read to them the teaching of the Bible in regard to conversion. Show what is the fruit of conversion, the evidence that they love God. Show that true conversion is a change of heart, of thoughts and purposes. Evil habits are to be given up. The sins of evil-speaking, of jealousy, of disobedience, are to be put away. A warfare must be waged against every evil trait of character. The believing one can understandingly take to himself the promise: “Ask and it shall be given you.” Matthew 7 : 7 “ --- 6 Testimonies for the Church, p. 95.

In a glance the instruction seems very simple. But from Jesus’ experience in preparing Nicodemus for his baptism , the Spirit of Prophecy’s guidance above will be more difficult to carry out now than in the past to Nicodemus. Preparing Nicodemus is easier, because he was indeed hungry and thirsty for the truth of salvation. He was even familiar with the Bible, because he was from the chosen people of God. And though the Bible should be opened to him fully from A up to Z, Bible truth available during his life time was still very limited. The New Testament Scriptures were not as yet available in his time.

Whereas the effort to prepare people for their baptism today is more difficult, because not all of them are hungry and thirsty for the truth. There are even many of them are not at all familiar with the Bible truth. So that we need longer time to make them familiar with the all truth prior to their baptism.

Examination of Candidates

“The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Adventist, or whether they are

taking their stand on the Lord's side to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing. Before baptism there should be a thorough inquiry as to the experience of the candidates. Let this inquiry be made, not in a cold and distant way, but kindly, tenderly, pointing the new converts to the Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world. Bring the requirements of the gospel to bear upon the candidates for baptism.

“One of the points upon which those newly come to the faith will need instruction is the subject of dress. Let the new converts be faithfully dealt with. Are they vain in dress? Do they cherish pride of heart? The idolatry of dress is a moral disease. It must not be taken over into the new life. In most cases, submission to the gospel requirements will demand a decided change in the dress.”

“There should be no careless in dress. For Christ's sake, whose witness we are, we should seek to make the best of our appearance. In the tabernacle service, God specified every detail concerning the garments of those who ministered before Him. Thus we are taught that He has a preference in regard to the dress of those who serve Him. Very specific were the directions given in regard to Aaron's robes, for his dress was symbolic. So the dress of Christ's followers should be symbolic. In all things we are to be representatives of Him. Our appearance in every respect should be characterized by neatness, modesty, and purity. But the word of God gives no sanction to the making of changes in apparel merely for the sake of fashion that we may appear like the world. Christians are not to decorate the person with costly array or expensive ornaments.”

“The words of Scriptures in regard to dress should be carefully considered. We need to understand that which the Lord of heaven appreciates in even the dressing of the body. All who are in earnest in seeking for the grace of Christ will heed the precious words of instruction inspired by God. Even the style of the apparel will express the truth of the gospel.”

“All who study the life of Christ and practice His teachings will become like Christ. Their influence will be like His. They will reveal soundness of character. As they walk in the humble path of obedience, doing the will of God, they exert an influence that tells for the advancement of the cause of God and the healthful purity of His work. In these thoroughly converted souls the world is to have a witness to the sanctifying *power of truth upon human character*.

“The knowledge of God and of Jesus Christ, expressed in character, is an exaltation above everything that is esteemed in earth or in heaven. It is the very highest education. It is the key that opens the portals of the heavenly city. This knowledge it is God's purpose that all who put on Christ by baptism shall possess.

And it is the duty of God's servants to set before these souls the privilege of their high calling in Christ Jesus." — **6 Testimonies for the church, pp. 95-97.**

Dear Reader! Besides the dress as a problem, one of the other requirements no less important to be observed is the hair style. Most of men and their hair styles of today seem no more suitable and fit to the dress they wear. That is why they appear untidy, more boorish and even slovenly.

One more point upon which the newly converts should be instructed is the teaching on the Health Reform. As founder of the Organization of Seventh-day Adventist Mrs. Ellen G. White said:

"The Lord presented a general plan before me. I was shown that God would give to His commandment-keeping people a reform diet, and that as they received this, their disease and suffering would be greatly lessened. I was shown that this work would progress"— **Counsels on Health, p. 531.**

"December 10, 1871, I was again shown that the health reform is one branch of the great work which is to fit a people for the coming of the Lord. It is as closely connected with the third angel's message as the hand is with the body." -- **1 Testimony Treasures, p. 320.**

"Greater reforms should be seen among the people who claim to be looking for the soon appearing of Christ. Health reform is to do among our people a work which it has not yet done. Many who are now only half converted on the question of meat eating will go from God's people, to walk no more with them."--
– **Counsels on Health, p.575.**

"As a people we have been given the work of making known the principles of health reform. There are some who think that the question of diet is not of sufficient importance to be included in their evangelistic work. But such make a great mistake. God's word declares: 'Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.' 1 Corinthians 10 : 31. The subject of temperance, in all its bearings, has an important place in the work of salvation."— **9 Testimonies for the Church, p. 112.**

Implementation of Baptism

"Whenever possible, let baptism be administered in a clear lake or running stream. And give to the occasion all the importance and solemnity that can be brought into it. At such a service angels of God are always present.

“The one who administers the ordinance of baptism should seek to make it an occasion of solemn, sacred influence upon all spectators. Every ordinance of the church should be so conducted as to be uplifting in its influence. Nothing is to be made common or cheap, or placed on a level with common things. Our churches need to be educated to greater respect and reverence for the sacred service of God. As ministers conduct the services connected with God’s worship, so they are educating and training the people. Little acts that educate and train and discipline the soul for eternity are of vast consequence in the uplifting and sanctifying of the church.

“In every church, baptismal robes should be provided for the candidates. This should not be regarded as a needless outlay of means. It is one of the things required in obedience to the injunction: “Let all things be done decently and in order.” 1 Corinthians 14 : 40.

“It is not well for one church to depend upon borrowing robes from another. Often when the robes are needed, they are not to be found; some borrower has neglected to return them. Every church should provide for its own necessity in this line. Let a fund be raised for this purpose. If the whole church unites in this, it will not be a heavy burden.” – 6 Testimonies for the Church, pp. 97 - 98.

After the Baptism

“The vows which we take upon ourselves in baptism embrace much. In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit we are buried in the likeness of Christ’s death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection, and we are to live a new life. Our life is to be bound up with the life of Christ. Henceforth the believer is to bear in mind that he is dedicated to God, to Christ, and to the Holy Spirit. He is to make all worldly considerations secondary to this new relation. Publicly he has declared that he will no longer live in pride and self-indulgence. He is no longer to live a careless, indifferent life. He has made a covenant with God. He has died to the world. He is to live to the Lord, to use for Him all his entrusted capabilities, never losing the realization that he bears God’s signature, that he is a subject of Christ’s kingdom, a partaker of the divine nature. He is to surrender to God all that he is and all that he has, employing all his gifts to His name’s glory.

“The obligations in the spiritual agreement entered into at baptism are mutual. As human beings act their part with wholehearted obedience, they have a right to pray: “Let it be known, Lord, that Thou art God in Israel.” The fact that you have been baptized in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit is an assurance that, if you will claim their help, these powers will help you in every emergency. The Lord will hear and answer the prayers of His sincere followers who wear Christ’ yoke and learn in His school His meekness and lowliness.

“If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God.” Colossians 3 : 1 – 3.

*“Put on therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, long-suffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another if any man have a quarrel against any : even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye. And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your heart, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankfulAnd whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.” Verses 12 – 17.” – **6 Testimonies for the Church, pp. 98 - 99.***

Example From Sister White’s Baptism

I will show you here in a glance the story of the life of Sister White, specifically related to her baptism by a pastor from Methodist Church denomination. She has narrated here below the following story:

“I was born at Gorham, Maine, November 26, 1827. My parents, Robert and Eunice Harmon, were for many years residents of this State. In early life they became earnest and devoted members of the Methodist Episcopal Church. In that church they held prominent connection, and labored for the conversion of sinners, and to build up the cause of God, for a period of forty years. During this time they had the joy of seeing their children, eight in number, all converted and gathered into the fold of Christ.

*“When I was but a child, my parents removed from Gorham to Portland, Maine. Here, at the age of nine years, an accident happened to me which was to affect my whole life.” – **Life Sketches, p. 17.***

*“At the age of eleven years I was converted, and when twelve years old was baptized, and joined t he Methodist Church. At the age of thirteen I heard William Miller deliver his second course of lectures in Portland Maine.” – **Early Writings, p. 11.***

Prior to her Baptism

“Soon after our return from the camp meeting, I, with several others, was taken into the church on probation. My mind was very much exercised on the subject of baptism. Young as I was, I could see but one mode of baptism authorized by the Scriptures, and that was immersion. Some of my Methodist sisters tried in vain to convince me that sprinkling was Bible baptism. The Methodist minister consented to immerse the candidates if they conscientiously preferred that method, although he intimated that sprinkling would be equally acceptable with God.

“Finally the time was appointed for us to receive this solemn ordinance. It was a windy day when we, twelve in number, went down into the sea to be baptized. The waves ran high and dashed upon the shore, but as I took up this heavy cross, my peace was like a river. When I arose from the water, my strength was nearly gone, for the power of the Lord rested upon me. I felt that henceforth I was not of this world, but had risen from the watery grave into a newness of life. The same day in the afternoon I was received into the church in full membership.”
– **Life Sketches, p. 25.**

After the Baptism

*After the baptism and a year later, “At the age of thirteen I heard William Miller deliver his second course of lectures in Portland, Maine.”-- **Early Writings, p. 11.***

*“Most of my father’s family were full believers in the advent, and for bearing testimony to this glorious doctrine seven of us were at one time cast out of the Methodist Church. At this time the words of the prophet were exceedingly precious to us :”Your brethren that hated you, that cast you out for My name’s sake, said, Let the Lord be glorified : but He shall appear to your joy, and they shall be ashamed.” Isa 66 : 5.”— **Early Writings, p. 13.***

Some important points from the Baptism of Sister White

Important lesson that should be taken from the experience of Mrs. White and her baptism is as follows :

- 1) Although most of her father's family was full believers in the advent message, and for bearing testimony to the glorious doctrine, the young Sister White was just admitting her conversion at the age of eleven, after hearing William Miller and his lectures.
- 2) Though having admitted her conversion when she reached the age of eleven, she seemed not in a hurry to submit herself to the baptism. Preparation for the baptism seems to take about one year, a fact that she was indeed serious to prepare herself for the solemn event.
- 3) Although Sister White was baptized by a Methodist minister, who was not as yet reformed to the doctrine of "Baptism through immersion," by Alexander Campbell, the earlier reformer after Martin Luther, her baptism was accepted by the Lord, that she was later appointed by the Lord to be His servant and founder of our Church. She gave us the true example, that through her message she said: "THERE IS NEED OF A MORE THOROUGH PREPARATION ON THE PART OF CANDIDATES FOR BAPTISM." – **6 Testimonies for the Church, p. 91**
- 4) Baptisms that have been administered in other churches with good preparation on the part of the candidates, and with right implementation of its rules, are legitimate in the sight of the Lord. This is a fact from the baptism of Sister White herself. And this is to testify that the popular churches outside are left only in partial darkness, not completely.
 "When a message comes in the name of the Lord to His people, no one may excuse himself from an investigation of its claims. No one can afford to stand back in an attitude of indifference and self-confidence, and say: "I know what truth is. I am satisfied with my position. I have set my stakes, and I will not be moved away from my position, whatever may come. I will not listen to the message of this messenger; for I know that it cannot be truth." IT IS FROM PURSUING THIS VERY COURSE THAT THE POPULAR CHURCHES WERE LEFT IN P A R T I A L D A R K N E S S, and that is why the message of heaven have not reached them." – **Counsels on Sabbath School Work, p. 28.**
- 5) Baptism granted to children of the household of God is allowable, as long as sustained by special preparations on the part of the children, conducted by their parents, according to the rules of implementation of baptism. Let them take enough time and not necessarily in a hurry to get the children into the sacred ceremonial event. Remember that Baptism is only once to be taken in a life time.

- 6) In preparation for her baptism Mrs. White did not merely base her faith upon the doctrine of Methodist Church, but even upon the teachings by William Miller and his associates, which at the time was indeed a new light. This is the reason why she had postponed her baptism for one more year later after making her preparation more effectively with the new light.
- 7) After baptism Mrs. White still continued to prove herself an ardent investigator of the Bible. And as the result even the whole family was later hated by their own fellow membership of the Church, so that at last they have been disfellowshipped from the Methodist Church for good.

Baptism, the first step of the process of Justification by Faith

The servant of the Lord, Mrs. White said:

“The requisite steps in conversion, in all cases, are faith, repentance, and baptism. Thus the true Christian church is united in one Lord, one faith, one baptism.” – **The Story of Redemption, p. 289.**

“The work for these last days is a missionary work. Present truth, from the first letter of its alphabet (A) to the last (Z), means missionary effort.” – **Counsels on Health, p. 300.**

Repentance is a part of faith, because faith without repentance is nil. Men of faith are those, who believe and repent. Not only believe. How many times they fall, they shall repent. They shall repent on and on as long as those instructed them in the Bible from A up to Z. They also can repent times and again, repeatedly, *“For a just man falleth seven times, and riseth up again.....”*-- **Proverb 24 : 16.**

After fully believe and repent, that is, after being a man of faith, then the first step in Christian life is to surrender oneself to the baptism. Baptism is only once in the life time, because it is a sign of entrance into the spiritual kingdom of Christ. Through such a baptism all our personal sins, either hereditary or of self-committed, all of which will be forgiven, because they will be transferred to the Lord Himself.

Under the guidance of the Spirit, either before or after the Baptism

Prior to His return to heaven from His mission here on earth, Jesus has ever said, that He is to commission the Holy Spirit to represent Him here on earth. The Holy Spirit is also known by the Spirit of Truth. Thus He said: *“Howbeit when he the Spirit of truth is come, he will guide you into all truth and he will shew you things to come.”* John 16 : 13. The servant of the Lord, Sister White then said :

“The outpouring of the Spirit in the days of the apostles was the b e g i n n i n g of the early, or the former, rain, and glorious was the result. To the end of time the presence of the Spirit is to abide with the true church.”--- **The Acts of the Apostles, pp. 54, 55.**

The true church in this time of the end is none other than the Laodicean church, which is the Seventh-day Adventist Church, because only in this church THE WHOLE TRUTHS in their authenticity could be found. Only in this church. We are to be led by the Holy Spirit into all truths and the things to come, even unto the true baptize and so on.

The other popular churches have been left in partial darkness, because they have rejected messages from God in their respective time. That means they have rejected the Holy Spirit that brought to them the truth that is badly needed by them at their appointed time. The result is, though still having been in possession of partial truth of the gospel, they have been fallen in sin against the Spirit, and the Holy Spirit of God will no more abide in their midst. Nevertheless as personal beings, especially for those who are still hungry and thirsty for the truth Holy Spirit of God is still calling to repentance.

In the experience of Mrs. White and her family, through the saving grace of God they have been led by the Holy Spirit to leave the Methodist Church to move first to join William Miller and his associates of the first-day Adventists, up to later on to establish her own church of Seventh-day Advents, the last church of the Laodiceans in the time of the end.

Prior to the Baptize

“Even among the heathen are those who have cherished the spirit of kindness; before the words of life had fallen upon their ears, they have befriended the missionaries, even ministering to them at the peril of their own lives. Among the heathen are those who worship God ignorantly, those to whom the light is never

brought by human instrumentality, yet they will not perish. Though ignorant of the written law of God, they have heard His voice speaking to them in nature, and have done the things that the law required. Their works are evidence that the Holy Spirit has touched their hearts, and they are recognized as the children of God.” -
The Desire of Ages, p. 638.

Not a few of the heathen have been now united with our churches in the world and even not a few of those we have successfully proselytized from other church denominations. Process of such proselytizing people into the church would of course through the ceremony of baptism. And to this end the servant of the Lord has warned:

“Pray with them, talk with them, but do not allow them to unite with God’s people in church relationship until they give decided evidence that the Spirit of God is working on their hearts.” --- **Review & Herald, May 21, 1901.**

After Baptism

“Christ has promised the gift of the Holy Spirit to His church and the promise belongs to us as much as to the first disciples. But like every other promise, it is given on conditions. There are many who believe and profess to claim the Lord’s promise; they talk about Christ and about the Holy Spirit, yet receive no benefit. They do not surrender the soul to be guided and controlled by the divine agencies. We cannot use the Holy Spirit. The Spirit is to use us. Through the Spirit God works in His people “to will and to do of His good pleasure.” Phil. 2: 13. But many will not submit to this. They want to manage themselves.” --- **The Desire of Ages, p. 672.**

The statement is addressed to the church, to all of us who have ever been baptized. The Holy Spirit promised to us is as much as to the first disciples of Jesus. However, there are several conditions should first be met, namely:

- (a). Souls should be submitted to the guidance and control of the divine agencies. Given that the Holy Spirit could not be touched nor seen, then the divine agencies would be the product of the Holy Spirit, which is the written testimony of Jesus Christ in THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY.
- (b). We can not use the Holy Spirit according to our will, nor according to the will of the church. The Holy Spirit is to use us and lead us unto all truth and the things to come.

- (c). *“No man can be a Christian without having the spirit of Christ; and if he has the spirit of Christ, it will be manifested in a refined, courteous disposition.”*
-- **In Heavenly Places, p. 180.**

Observing so many Baptisms carried out by the churches up to now

‘BAPTISM IS A MOST SACRED AND IMPORTANT ORDINANCE, AND THERE SHOULD BE A THOROUGH UNDERSTANDING AS TO ITS MEANING. IT MEANS REPENTANCE FOR SIN, AND THE ENTRANCE UPON A NEW LIFE IN CHRIST JESUS. THERE SHOULD BE NO UNDUE HASTE TO RECEIVE THE ORDINANCE.’ ----
6 Testimonies for the Church, p. 93.

Based upon the divinely instructions above, there are several requirements to be first fulfilled prior to a ceremonial baptism could be carried out. They are as follows:

1. There should be a thorough understanding on all the requirements that should be met, either by the candidates of baptism or by the gospel ministers themselves.
2. There should be a thorough repentance from sin. That is, every act of transgression of the Law and all its rules of implementations in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY should stop.
3. There should first be seen in the life of the candidates a marked change into the more similarities to the life of Christ.
4. There should be no undue haste to grant baptism to anyone.

But from the facts of so many baptisms carried out by the churches in the world up to now we should doubt if the names of so many people now registered with the churches are truly Christians of the Lord. It seems clear that the leadership of the Church has deliberately changed most of the requirements laid out in the written testimonies of the Spirit, which is the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY to meet their own private conditions, which is mainly motivated by the number of new converts to win by the ministers, targeted by their superiors in the Organization. This is the reason why most of the rules for implementing the true Baptism in the churches have been left out of consideration.

The doctrines of health reform, dress reform, Christian temperance, and the things to come (John 16 : 13), as those laid out in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY have been deliberately neglected by the Organization. And now you will see why the call for a spiritual revival and a spiritual reformation in the Review and Herald, dated February 25, 1902 has been so completely left out of consideration.

It is very difficult today to see new converts coming to their baptism through the call of God's own Spirit. Most of those coming to the baptism only through intimidation, or through persuasion, and none coming through repentance to the obedience of the Law of God and all its rules of implementation in the SPIRIT OF PROPHECY. The consequence is very serious, because the servant of the Lord said:

“The accession of members who have not been renewed in heart and reformed in life is a source of weakness to the church. This fact is often ignored. Some ministers and churches are so desirous of securing an increase of numbers that they do not bear faithful testimony against unchristian habits and practices. Those who accept the truth are not taught that they cannot safely be world lings in conduct while they are Christians in name.” --- Evangelism, p. 319.

“Too much hasty work is done in adding names to the church roll. Serious defects are seen in the characters of some who join the church. Those who admit them say, we will first get them into the church, and then reform them. But this is a mistake. The very first work to be done is the work of reform. Pray with them, talk with them, but do not allow them to unite with God's people in the church relationship until they give decided evidence that the Spirit of God is working on their hearts.”

“Many of those whose names are registered on the Church books are not Christians.” --- Review & Herald, May 21, 1901.

Baptism That Fails

A baptism failed because it is not approved by the Lord. because not all the rules of implementation of the Law in THE SPIRIT OF PROPHECY were obeyed. Those whose baptism failed should have understood that they have lacked the guidance of the Holy Spirit to lead them unto all Truth and the Things to Come. (John 16 : 13). And the result is that they failed to repent thoroughly, to get the remission of their sins fully. Such are those who failed to gain the approval of God mercy to gain entrance into His spiritual kingdom here on earth. Of such people the servant of the Lord has ever warned:

1. *“Many of those whose names are registered on the Church books are not Christians.” --- Review & Herald, May 21, 1901.*
2. *“There are many ministers who have never been converted. . . . Review & Herald, October 8, 1898.*

The chance to repent for the first time in Christian life is at the baptism. When someone is deemed “*to have never been converted*”, it means that ever since the first time he was baptized he is still lacking the sign of entrance into the spiritual kingdom of Christ on earth. He is still lacking the status of citizenship of the kingdom of Christ. It is because his baptism was not as yet approved in the sight of the heavenly intelligence. Indeed, “*The test of discipleship is not brought to bear as closely as it should be upon those who present themselves for baptism. It should be understood whether they are simply taking the name of Seventh-day Advents, or whether they are taking their stand on the Lord’s side, to come out from the world and be separate, and touch not the unclean thing.*” -- **6 Testimonies for the Church, p. 95.**

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