

Hidden Hills *Missionary* Baptist Herald

“Preaching Jesus Christ crucified, buried, and risen to a condemned world”



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THE FOREKNOWLEDGE OF GOD

By C. D. Cole

"For whom he did foreknow (Greek proginosko) , he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren" (Rom. 8:29).

"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew (Gk. proginosko). Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel" (Rom. 11:2).

"Ye therefore, beloved, seeing ye know these things before (Gk. proginosko), beware lest ye also, being led away with the error of the wicked, fall from your own steadfastness" (II Peter 3:17).

"Which knew (proginosko) me from the beginning, if they would testify, that after the most straitest sect of our religion I lived a Pharisee" (Acts 26:5).

"Who verily was foreordained (Gk. proginosko) before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you," (I Peter 1:20).

"Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge (Gk. prognosko)

Baptism

How is it done?

Is it necessary?

And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (Mark 16:15-16).

Baptism—what is it? Why is it done? To whom should it be done? There are many ideas from learned men who profess to be followers of Christ. The unbelieving world must be confused at the different ways various churches define Baptism. Some say a person must be buried in water. Some say the person may have water poured on his head. Others say it is right to sprinkle water on either infants or adults. Which is right? Does it matter? When Dr. J. Vernon McGee was living, this author listened to his radio broadcast from time to time. One day while listening to a session which included the topic of Baptism, Dr. McGee said, "It really doesn't make any difference." Dr. McGee was ordained a Presbyterian minister, who in 1949 left his denomination because of what he termed liberalism—and became pastor of the Church of the Open Door in Pasa-

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sis) of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain:" (Acts 2:23).

"Elect according to the foreknowledge (Gk. prognosis) of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied" (I Peter 1:2).

In the foregoing Scriptures we have given every passage in the New Testament where the word "foreknowledge" is used. It will be noted that it is used five times in the verb form and two times in the noun form. In the verb form it is used three times of God and two times of man. One time when used of God it is translated "foreordain" (I Peter 1:20).

It is our candid judgment that there is hardly any doctrine more generally and more woefully misunderstood than the doctrine now before us. It is well to remember that the meaning of Bible terms is not determined by their current and popular use, or by reference to human diction-

aries, but by their usage in the Scriptures. We are apt to assume that we know the meaning of a particular word and fail to test our assumption by the use of the concordance. Ask the average person what the word "flesh" means, and he will be quick to reply that it means the body of man or beast. But the word does not always have that meaning. It often refers to the sinful and fleshly nature.

"For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not" (Rom. 7:18).

"But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof" (Rom. 13:14).

"For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh" (Phil. 3:3).

Most people think the word "world" stands for the human race, when, in fact, the word is seldom so employed in the Scriptures.

"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18,19).

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for them which thou hast given me; for they are thine" (John 17:9).

"And we know that we are of God, and the whole world lieth in wickedness" (I John 5:19).

Spurgeon says that the word "world" is used in some seven or eight different senses in the Bible. Again, take the word

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"immortality." The popular idea is that it refers to the indestructibility of the soul. But the word is never used of the soul; it always refers to the body.

"For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality. So when this corruptible shall have put on incorruption, and this mortal shall have put on immortality, then shall be brought to pass the saying that is written, Death is swallowed up in victory" (I Cor. 15:53,54).

"But is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and hath brought life and immortality to light through the gospel:" (II Tim. 1:10).

FOREKNOWLEDGE A DIVINE ATTRIBUTE

A fresh study of the subject before us raised the question as to whether "foreknowledge" should be classed as one of the Divine attributes. A Divine attribute is a quality belonging to the nature of God, one of His personal perfections, something which belongs inherently to His character or nature. For example, love, mercy, grace, and wisdom are qualities of the Divine nature, and are therefore attributes. Our conclusion, after further study, is that "foreknowledge" is both an attribute and an act of God. When the word is used in the popular sense, in the sense most people use it, it refers to God's knowledge of events before they actually happen. In this sense "foreknowledge" is one of the Divine attributes like love, mercy, wisdom, grace, etc.

FOREKNOWLEDGE A DIVINE ACT

The word foreknowledge as used in the Bible can hardly be made to refer to a quality or attribute of the Divine nature. It is used in the sense of a Divine act rather than a Divine **quality**. We would not say that pre-

destination and election are **Divine attributes**, but rather **Divine acts**. Foreknowledge, when used of events, is an attribute; when used of persons, it is an immanent act of God, an act remaining and operating within the divine nature. It is the difference between God's nature and God's **activities**; between what He is, and what He does. Foreknowledge, when considered as an attribute, is a branch of the Divine omniscience; and when considered as an act it is a branch of the doctrine of the Divine decrees.

After writing the foregoing paragraph, we turned to the article on "Foreknowledge" in *The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia*, written by Dr. C. W. Hodge. And he states exactly what we have been trying to say. Let the reader study his statement along with what we have already written.

"The word 'foreknowledge' has two meanings. It is a term used in theology to denote the prescience or foresight of God, that is, His knowledge of the entire course of events which are future from the human point of view; and it is also used in AV and RV to translate the Greek words *proginoskein* and *prognosis* in the NT, in which instances the word 'foreknowledge' approaches closely the idea of foreordination. In the sense of prescience foreknowledge is an aspect of God's omniscience. God's knowledge, according to the Scriptures, is perfect, that is, it is omniscience." (C. W. Hodge).

FOREKNOWLEDGE AND FOREORDINATION

When foreknowledge is used as a divine act, it is practically the same as foreordination.

Let Dr. Hodge Speak again:

"While, therefore, the foreknowledge of God in the sense of prescience is asserted in the New Testament, this is not the meaning of the term when used to translate the Greek words *proginoskein* and *prognosis*. These words which are translated in the AV and RV

The Foreknowledge of God — Continued

by the word 'foreknowledge' and once by the word 'foreordain':

"Who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world, but was manifest in these last times for you " (I Peter 1:20), mean much more than mere intellectual foresight or prescience. Both the verb and the noun approach the idea of foreordination and are closely connected with that idea in the passages where these words occur."

When "foreknowledge" is applied to events, including the free action of men, it means God's foresight or knowledge beforehand. But when it refers to persons it signifies to regard with favour, denoting not mere cognition but an affection for the person in view. The word "foreknowledge" is not in the Old Testament, but the word "know" occurs often, and frequently means to love or choose or ordain.

"They have set up kings, but not by me: they have made princes, and I knew it not: of their silver and their gold have they made them idols, that they may be cut off" (Hosea 8:4).

"Before I formed thee in the belly I knew thee; and before thou camest forth out of the womb I sanctified thee, and I ordained thee a prophet unto the nations." (Jer. 1:5).

"You only have I known of all the families of the earth: therefore I will punish you for all your iniquities" (Amos 3:2).

"For the LORD knoweth the way of the righteous: but the way of the ungodly shall perish" (Ps. 1:6).

In these passages it is not acquaintance but affection or appointment that is meant. And the word "know" is often used in the New Testament in the same sense.

"And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work

iniquity" (Matt. 7:23).

This means He did not know them savingly.

"I am the good shepherd, and know my sheep, and am known of mine" (Jn. 10:14).

"But if any man love God, the same is known of him" (I Cor. 8:3).

And again, *"The Lord knoweth them that are his" (II Tim. 2:19).*

In these verses the knowledge of Christ is limited to the saved, and therefore, cannot signify an acquaintance with, but rather an affection for. God is acquainted with everybody; there is no limit to His knowledge about people.

Now, the "foreknowledge of persons" means to foreknow with a benign purpose. It means to know with the intention of blessing. For God to foreknow a person is to regard that person with favor and with a purpose to save. The foreknown are to be finally glorified, because God foreknew them for this purpose. God's first act of benevolence towards sinners was to foreknow them. And His foreknowledge of them is the foundation (historically speaking) of all subsequent blessings. *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son" (Rom. 8:29).*

God looked upon some poor sinners with gracious favor and determined to make them like His glorious Son. *"God hath not cast away his people which he foreknew. Wot ye not what the scripture saith of Elias? how he maketh intercession to God against Israel" (Rom. 11:2).* On this verse Dr. A. T. Robertson, in his *Word Pictures*, makes this comment: "Probably the Hebrew sense of choice beforehand. The nation of Israel was God's chosen people and so all the individuals in it could not be cast off."

The Foreknowledge of God — Concluded

Here Dr. Robertson makes the word "foreknow" mean to choose beforehand. Those whom God looked upon with gracious favor, back in eternity, will not be cast away either in the present or in the future. They are the *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied"* (I Peter 1:2). In this verse election is based upon the foreknowledge of God the Father. Those whom the Father looked upon with gracious favor were elected unto the obedience of faith and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ. And this obedience is the result of the sanctifying power of the Holy Spirit. And may the reader note and remember, that while election is unto salvation, this salvation is not without faith in the blood of Jesus Christ. The elect are to be justified, but they are to be justified by faith.

"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:" (Rom. 5:1).

"Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Rom. 3:28).

"But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness" (Rom. 4:5), et al.

To be exact and critical, the writer believes that, although divine foreknowledge is close akin to and associated with such words as election, predestination, and foreordination, it has a distinct meaning of its own. The divine order in *"For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also*

justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified" (Rom. 8:29, 30), is foreknowledge, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification. *"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied"* (I Peter 1:2). The order is foreknowledge, election, and sanctification. So the foreknown are elected, predestinated, called, justified, sanctified, and glorified. And since every aspect of salvation is of grace, God's foreknowledge of persons is His gracious regard and love for poor sinners. And because of this gracious regard for them, He chose them unto salvation, predestinated them unto the adoption of sons, calls them by His grace, justifies them by grace through faith in the blood of His Son, sanctifies them by His Spirit, and will glorify them when the Lord comes. May every reader *"give diligence to make your calling and election sure: for if ye do these things, ye shall never fall"* (II Peter 1:10).



The Busy Man

If you want to get a favor done
 By some obliging friend,
 And want a promise, safe and sure,
 On which you may depend,
 Don't go to him who always has
 Much leisure time to plan;
 But if you want your favor done,
 Just ask the busy man.
 The man with leisure never has
 A moment he can spare,
 He's always "putting off" until
 His friends are in despair.
 But he whose most waking hours
 Are crowded full of work,
 Forgets the art of wasting time,
 He cannot stop to shirk...
 So when you want a favor done
 And want it right away,
 Go to the man who constantly
 Works twenty hours a day.
 He'll find a moment sure, somewhere,
 That has no other use,
 And fix you while the idle man
 Is framing an excuse.

— Author Unknown

Baptism — continued

dena, California, where he remained as pastor until 1970. The Church of the Open Door was/is a non-denominational church. There is little doubt in this writer's mind that there were people from every conceivable background in that church—who had been taught various methods of "baptism" — sprinkling, pouring (effusion) or immersion.

Was Dr. McGee's statement correct? Does it matter? And which is it—immersion, sprinkling, or pouring? What did the early church practice? For one, this writer would definitely want to practice what Jesus and his disciples practiced. How about you?

Untrained and unskilled in either Greek or Hebrew, the author has been forced to rely on the English Bible — concordances, dictionaries, lexicons and other helps. Common people are in the same boat. The lion's share of God's people are "common people," are they not? *"Not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called."* (1 Cor. 1:26). Most of us must rely on the tools given us in our own native tongue, else we remain in the camp of the unlearned. With these things in mind, we go to our Scriptures and find the term "baptized." The verses quoted at the heading of this article contain the term "baptized," so we shall begin there. Baptized? What does the word mean? Words signify something!

What is the proper mode for Baptism?

The standard for definition of English words, especially as they were translated into our Bible is the *Oxford English Dictionary* (OED). Generally regarded as the most comprehensive, accurate, and scholarly dictionary of the English language, as of November 30, 2005 it included about 301,100 main entries, comprising over 350 million printed characters. This dictionary tells us

where words came from and how they were used at the time our Bible was translated. So what about Baptism? The noun "baptism" is defined as **"1. The action or ceremony of baptizing; immersion of a person in water, or application of water by pouring or sprinkling, as a religious rite, symbolical of moral or spiritual purification or regeneration, and, as a Christian ordinance, betokening initiation into the Church."**

Thus, one would think, by this definition from an English Dictionary so renowned for its completeness, that either immersion, effusion or sprinkling is meant by the term baptism. Turning to the verb form of the word which is "baptize," we read this definition from the OED: **"1. trans. To immerse in water, or pour or sprinkle water upon, as a means of ceremonial purification, or in token of initiation into a religious society, especially into the Christian Church;"**

This definition of the verb "baptize" leaves us with the same thought. The proper mode of baptism could be either immersion, effusion, or sprinkling.

Many Baptists have argued that the men who translated our King James Version (Authorized Version) were mainly Anglicans and were prejudiced toward the idea that baptism was immersion, dipping, or plunging into water. Said they, "The Greek word 'baptizo bap-tid'-zo' was not translated, but was transliterated." The author has made this statement himself—repeating what he had learned in earlier years. The fact is that the English word "baptize" had been in used at least since the 14th century and was familiar to the translators and the English speaking people. Both John Wycliffe and William Tyndale who translated the New Testament in 1380 and 1534 respectively used the term in their English translations of the Bible. So, it is apparent the word was

Baptism — continued

long in use in the Scriptures before the Authorized Version was translated. So where does that leave us concerning baptism?

The definition of words is of great importance. The etymology of words is, perhaps, of importance just as great. What is etymology? It is the study of word origins. It is the process of tracing out and describing the elements of a word with their modifications of form and sense. So, we can look at the etymology of a word in a good dictionary and find the original sense of it.

Looking at the OED under the word "baptize," we find this in the etymology: "**(a. F. baptize-r, -iser (11th c). Ad. L. baptiza-re , ad. Gr. Baptidzein to immerse, bathe, wash, drench, in Christian use appropriated to the religious rite, f. baptein to dip, plunge, bathe.)**"

This traces the word as in use in the French language about the 11th century. It is shown as having roots in both the Latin and the Greek languages. We all know the New Testament was written in Koine Greek or the language of the common people of New Testament times. Etymology of the word proves conclusively that baptism was, in the days of the New Testament, immersion, dipping, plunging, bathing of a believer in water.

If this is true—and it is, then both pouring (effusion) and sprinkling are not Biblical modes of baptism. This means that somewhere, sometime, man has invented something other than immersion and called it baptism. Those who seek to truly follow the Lord would want to be baptized in the same way that Jesus was. He was buried in water. The description of Jesus' baptism certainly draws this picture for the writer:

And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water: and, lo, the heavens were opened unto him, and he saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove, and lighting upon him: (Matthew 3:16).

In the Greek language, as we have learned, baptize was to immerse, dip, or plunge. If Jesus was in the waters of the River Jordan, and he was—then John the Baptist must have immersed him. John baptized all of the apostles, so he must

have immersed them as well. All of the apostles, including Matthias (elected to fill the apostolic office vacated by Judas Iscariot) were baptized by John the Baptist. This tells the author that John's baptism was Christian baptism since neither Christ nor the apostles were "re-baptized."

Why are believers baptized?

Why? Because the Lord Jesus Christ commanded His apostles who were officers of the church to baptize disciples. It is not an option—it is obedience to a commandment. That is the first and most important reason.

Baptism is prerequisite to eating the Lord's Supper—that is, baptism is required for church membership. When the Apostle Peter preached his great sermon on the day of Pentecost fifty days after Jesus' resurrection, the people were pricked in their hearts and asked, "What shall we do?" Peter said, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." (Acts 2:38). In verse 41 following, we are told "...they that gladly received his word were baptized: and the same day there were added unto them

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If you love the Lord Jesus Christ,
 and want to walk in His ways;
you would love His church,
 the house of God - Christ's body,
where you would grow in grace -
 and be conformed to Jesus' image.

Schedule of Services

Sunday Worship.....12:00 PM
 Wednesday Prayer..... 7:00 PM
 Our meeting house is located just south
 of the intersection of Bendapole Road
 and Passtheba Avenue

Gospel of Jesus Christ... — Concluded

(the church at Jerusalem) *about three thousand souls.*"

Baptism is a believer's profession of his faith and identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. In his burial in water, he shows that he is dead with Christ, buried, and risen with him to walk in newness of life. He shows his allegiance to Jesus Christ in baptism.

The New Testament has no record of a person believing, then refusing baptism. All we have records of were baptized after they believed—without exception. They were immersed in water at the hands of the Lord's authority after having believed. This is the New Testament pattern.

Who is to be baptized?

Believers—yes, they were old enough and mature enough to submit themselves to baptism. Believer's baptism is the doctrine of the New Testament. "But," someone asks, "Why do priests and others sprinkle babies now?" That, too, is an innovation of man. There is absolutely no record of babies having been baptized in the Holy Scriptures.

"But," another objects, "What about the household of Lydia?" A denominational preacher once contended that Lydia had babies in her household and those babies were baptized. Let us read the account:

And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us. (Acts 16:14-15).

A Baptist preacher, hearing the denominational preacher make this statement said, "That's not true. Lydia had a teen-age son who had a hair-lip and spoke with a lisp. He had huge brown eyes and parted his hair in the middle." The other preacher said, "Where did you get that?" The Baptist replied, "From the same place you got the babies." There were no babies, else, there would be a clear example somewhere in the New Testament. There is none.

— lk

