



FROM THE EDITOR



By Mark A. Taylor

Baptism—Pursuing the Right Possibility

It is tragic—and inexcusable—that in the history of the church baptism has become the water that divides.”

Widely known Restoration historian, lecturer, and writer Leroy Garrett included this statement in the final edition of his “occasional newsletter,” *Once More With Love*. Imitating William Barclay, who included a “Testament of Faith” in his *A Spiritual Biography*, Garrett wrote a paragraph or two about each of 17 core subjects, to “help my readers to better understand where I am coming from. . . .”

Garrett continues:

Baptism may well be the most beautiful and meaningful of all God’s ordinances in that it is a reenactment of the gospel itself—death, burial, and resurrection. It is a beatific metaphor in that in it the believer is buried with Christ in the likeness of His death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection. It is God’s work of grace in that it is something God does to us rather than something we do ourselves—the circumcision of Christ (Colossians 2:11, 12).

As Garrett sees it, the Bible “clearly” connects baptism “to salvation (Mark 16:16), forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:38), putting on Christ (Galatians 3:27),

and the answer of a good conscience (1 Peter 3:21).” Still he acknowledges, “due to the long history of confusion on the subject,” that divergent views are held by many who truly believe in Jesus and serve Him well.

Garrett’s position reflects the spirit of the articles about baptism in this week’s issue. It is possible to make the biblical connection between baptism and salvation while loving and listening to believers who see the subject differently. It is possible to view such a posture as compromise, but it also is possible to see it as humility. And it is possible that, when we approach the unimmersed with humility, we will baptize more of them than with any other attitude.

Surely this is the possibility we should be pursuing.

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YOU WILL NOTICE THAT DR. ROBERT FIFE’S ARTICLE (p. 4) was first published in *CHRISTIAN STANDARD* in 1985. We know there are other “classic articles” that deserve to be published again. We’d be pleased to receive readers’ suggestions. If you have filed a *CHRISTIAN STANDARD* article that others should read again today, please tell us about it.

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