

WATER REGENERATION?

By: Glenn Hitchcock

"Ye are a peculiar people, zealous of good works (I Peter 2:9)." When a person grows up in a denomination it will take about ten years of constant living and study in the church to understand my brethren. The late Otis Gatewood says there is no such thing as "converting a church," you have to grow one! If I ever had any doubts about this statement they are all gone now!

The denominations have taught so long that the church of Christ members believe in a "water salvation" that many of them think this is really so! Since churches of Christ have no official "mouthpiece" it is difficult to get the gainsayers to accept one person's word concerning a common faith. I have never known a member of the Lord's church who believed in water salvation. I never heard any elder, preacher or teacher remotely hint that we believe in a "water salvation." Enemies of the church who found themselves unable to harmonize their doctrine with God's Word hatched this accusation up! Most denominations teach and believe (ask their preacher) that God's saving power goes into effect on the sinner and completes its job before the sinner ever sets foot in the water! The Bible teaches that, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Hence there is a conflict with denominational doctrine and the Bible. Since we believe what the Bible says we are accused of believing that the "power to save" resides in the water!

No properly informed person can believe the Bible and not accept the fact that God requires baptism "for the remission of sins." (See Acts 2:38; I Pet. 3:21f) It is neither fair nor true to say that members of the churches of Christ believes the "water saves." "Jesus died for our sins, according to the Scriptures," but no one can be saved without being IN CHRIST. The Bible teaches that only in

baptism in water can we "enter into Christ (Gal. 3:26-27)." Since this is the doorway into Christ then baptism in water is necessary to salvation, but that is a far cry from saying that water is a savior! Don't be misled by the prejudices of men! Come in contact with the blood of Christ right now by being immersed in water for the remission of your sins (Rom. 6:1-8).