

**Attention!**

**Something to think about...**

*“For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, so that each one may receive compensation for his deeds done through the body, in accordance with what he has done, whether good or bad.” 2 Corinthians 5:10*

**Jesus said, even what we say, matters...**

*“But I tell you that for every careless word that people speak, they will give an account of it on the day of judgment.”*  
Matthew 12:36

**December Birthdays**

17 Bill Brown 18 Alexis Brown 31 Bob Pescador

**December Anniversaries**

12 Ron & Peggy Woodruff 18 Jim & Marie Burruss

# Indio Informer

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## Denying the Obvious

John M. Buttrey II

I have heard many weak and ridiculous arguments against the essential nature of water baptism. However, with respect to its necessity, the Bible is really not hard to understand. The apostle Paul is clear and to the point in his Roman letter: *“Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life.”* (Romans 6:3-4)

When Paul says we have been baptized into Christ, the only baptism he could have in mind is water baptism (cf. Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 8:12, 36; 10:47; 16:15, 33; 18:8; 19:5; 22:16). Over and over again water baptism into Christ is found in the New Testament. Those who wish to deny the need for water baptism must resort to obvious denials of the truth.

In a desperate attempt to deny the necessity of water baptism, Charles Swindoll gives us an example of a desperate distortion of Bible truth. He does so in his book, *The Grace Awakening*. Commenting on Paul's words in Romans 6:3-4, Swindoll writes: *“To understand what this is all about, we have to set aside the concept of water baptism and understand this is a reference to dry baptism. Some baptisms in the New Testament are wet and some of them are dry. This one is in the latter category. The word **baptizo** primarily has to do with identification.... When we believed in the Savior's death and resurrection, we were 'dipped' into the same scene. Our identity was changed.”* (*The Grace Awakening*, 1990, p. 117).

With all the references to water baptism in the New Testament, one wonders how Swindoll can conclude that Paul was writing about a dry baptism? If it is a dry baptism that puts us into Christ, why did

**Regular Meeting Times**

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.  
Sunday.....10:45 a.m.  
Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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the Ethiopian eunuch ask about water for his baptism? (Acts 8:36). If it is a dry baptism that saves us, it was pointless for Peter say at the household of Cornelius, *“Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?”* (Acts 10:47 Emphasis Mine).

The reason Swindoll concludes Paul to be describing a dry baptism is because the inspired apostle contradicts what Charles Swindoll, and many others, believe and teach concerning the necessity of water baptism.

As if his denial of the obvious is not enough, Swindoll also changes the meaning of the word *baptizo*, saying it primarily has reference to identification. This is not true! There is not one Greek Lexicon that will support his distortion of this word.

In light of the clear teachings of Scripture, why do so many, who claim to believe the Bible, not accept what it clearly teaches in regard to water baptism? Perhaps, the bigger question is: How should one respond when the Bible clashes with their long held doctrinal beliefs? The apostle Paul was faced with this very issue. He went from a violent persecutor of the church to a baptized believer. The Bereans were also confronted with a new truth. They give us a great example as to how one should respond when faced with the same: *“Now these were more noble-minded than those in Thessalonica, for they received the word with great eagerness, examining the Scriptures daily to see whether these things were so. Therefore, many of them believed, along with a number of prominent Greek women and men.”* (Acts 17:11-12).

When confronted with a conflict between what we believe, and what the Bible teaches, let us not, like Swindoll and others, resort to ridiculous non-sensical arguments and desperate distortions. Rather, let us accept the word of God for what it is: Truth (John 17:17). Accepting and obeying the truth of God's word is the only way to be saved.

### **“The Judge”**

By Lance Cordle

For the past several weeks, Major League Baseball fans, and in particular, New York Yankees' fans have been very excited because of the approaching eclipse of a long-held home run record. The record was held by Roger Maris and consisted of him hitting

sixty-one home runs (one more than the previous record, held by George Herman “Babe” Ruth) in a single, regular season. This time, a young man named Aaron Judge was moving toward the long-held mark. Finally, on Sunday, October 4, 2022, Aaron hit the home run that gave him the single-season American League record of sixty-two. His accomplishment was proclaimed far and wide and even the son of Roger Maris celebrated his moment of glory.

Throughout Aaron Judge's career, reporters have used his name in interesting ways—“holding court,” “giving the verdict,” etc. After he hit “#62,” I read where he was referred to simply as “The Judge.” Of course, this was a way for the reporter to have a catchy headline and to point out Aaron Judge's unique place in Major League Baseball. However, the minute I read, “The Judge,” it made me think of the one, true judge of all mankind, God Almighty.

The Bible affirms that we are moving toward a final day, a day we refer to as the “day of judgment” (Matthew 11:24). It is a sobering thought to realize that *“we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ”* (2 Corinthians 5:10), and that *“each of us will give account of himself to God”* (Romans 14:12). In fact, it is my conviction that this impending judgement is the primary reason that some people ignore the evidence and refuse to believe in God.

As we contemplate that great day and event, it is helpful to keep in mind the main trait of our judge: He is righteous (2 Timothy 4:8). In the life of Abraham, as he struggled with the overwhelming sense of doom for Sodom and Gomorrah, asked, *“Shall not the Judge of all the earth do what is right?”* When everything (and I mean, everything) is taken into consideration, God will do what is right in regard to every person. Human judges are imperfect, are sometimes biased, and sometimes, “bought”. But God does not have those flaws. When we stand before him (Revelation 20:12), we can be sure that all the facts will be considered, and the verdict will be just. What's more, Christians can rest in the fact that “The Judge” is a loving and merciful God (Ephesians 2:4, 5).

So, (as we often sing) “there's a great day coming...”

“Are you ready for the judgment day?”