

Colossians 2:10-14

10. “and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;

11. and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ;

12. having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

13. When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions,

14. having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us, which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.”

Many people today are taught that baptism is a work, and therefore baptism has nothing to do with a person’s salvation. According to Colossians 2:11-12, which we just read, baptism is definitely a work alright; but contrary to popular belief, God is the One doing the work. And New Testament water baptism definitely has much to do with a person’s salvation.

In verse 11 we are told that at baptism a person receives a spiritual circumcision, not performed with human hands, but by God Himself. This scripture reveals that God removes “the body of flesh” as a person is buried with Christ. Here the entirety of a person’s flesh is removed, or cut off, not just the foreskin--as foreshadowed by physical circumcision done by human hands under the Old Testament Law of Moses.

Verse 12 then states that an individual is, quote--”buried with Christ in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God.” Here the One who is working at baptism is God Himself, as He raises up the person baptized from being dead in

their sins and transgression. This is in the likeness of God's raising Jesus from physical death in the grave.

Notice also this work God promises to do at baptism is contingent upon the person's faith. Verse 12 explicitly states: "You were raised up with Him through faith in the working of God." Without this specifically stated faith, all a person receives at baptism is getting wet.

Verse 13 sums up the whole process with these words: "When you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions." Notice the death, burial, and resurrection accessed through faith at baptism makes a person alive together with Christ. The resultant forgiveness of sin referred to here, is consistent with other New Testament scriptures that indicate forgiveness of sin is gained by faith at baptism.

But even more than this good news, the next verse, verse 14, declares that the Christian is now no longer under the Old Testament Law, for it is nailed to the cross for the individual at his baptism. Biblical, New Testament water baptism sets the individual free from the law of sin and death. And as a resurrected man, one who has a part in this first resurrection, he is free to walk by faith on the earth rather than by sight.