

My Two Witnesses

by G.W. North

God introduced a change in the order of baptism to break with traditionalism and doctrine, and to emphasize the importance of Spirit baptism.

Scripture: Deuteronomy 19:15, Matthew 3:11, Acts 2:38, Acts 10:44

Topics: "Baptism", "Witness"

Description

G.W. North emphasizes the significance of the number two in scripture, particularly in relation to the establishment of witness and testimony. He explains that God introduced a new order in the Church regarding baptism, moving away from traditional practices that had become limiting. North highlights that both the apostle to the Gentiles and early Church members received the Holy Spirit before water baptism, indicating a shift in understanding and practice. He argues that the Church needed to be taught by God to rearrange their beliefs about baptism, as traditional views were rooted in a time when the Holy Spirit was not available. Ultimately, God sought to free His Church from outdated practices and establish a new understanding of baptism.

Transcript

Students of the Bible have discovered that numbers are used in scripture with special care and mathematical precision. The number two, for instance, bears relationship to witness, so we read that 'in the mouth of two witnesses every word shall be established'. Of old, at least two persons were required as witnesses to an event before anyone's word or allegations became acceptable as proper testimony, or could be established as legal evidence. By this means also a thing is established and bears spiritual authority. As an illustration of this we only need to read Joseph's words in Genesis 41:32 'it is doubled unto Pharaoh twice because the thing is established by God and God will shortly bring it to pass'.

We find then that concerning this matter of baptism the scriptures surely reveal a change of order tantamount to a change of method being introduced into the life of the Church by God Himself. It seems that in breaking out of the narrows of Jerusalem and Judea into the largeness of the uttermost parts of the earth, the Lord also broke with much that had already become traditionalism in the earliest days of the new-born Church. It can be neither accident nor coincidence that both the apostle to the Gentiles and all the members of the original Church established under Gentile authority were baptised in Spirit before they were baptised in water.

Be not Entangled Again

Begging the question that may be asked, we observe that by doing this, God was evidently breaking with the limiting traditionalism and doctrine which had already grown up about the practice of water baptism. What He did at Damascus and Caesarea firmly placed it back in its true position, laying the emphasis where it should be laid and putting things into proper perspective. Water baptism had its beginnings and first became established in Judaism under an Old Testament prophet who could not minister the Spirit. This man's practice and limited doctrines had, without any discredit to him, become a precedent among believers and necessarily so, for they were right for the time. Why, even the Lord Jesus Himself followed John's method, for it was of God.

The whole sprang from the fact that during that entire period the Holy Ghost was not available for man, either before or during or following water baptism. Therefore it can readily be grasped that the ideas in human minds governing the understanding and practice of baptism in the Church needed to be rearranged. They certainly needed to be taught of God about it, for among Church leaders the lesser had already become established as a necessary step toward the greater baptism. And this is not entirely surprising, for all those leaders were Jews by nature, with a most ready tendency to become traditionalised in their beliefs. But God would have none of it; He therefore struck out in a definite, if not a contradictory manner to rescue His Church. He would no more have John's baptism than Moses' law or Abraham's circumcision made necessary or obligatory upon His people.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/gw-north/my-two-witnesses/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net