

## Come on in, Boys, the Water's Fine!

There is a scene from the movie, "O Brother Where art Thou" that describes a water baptism service. The movie scene begins by a congregation of white robed people walking through the woods singing:

*"Oh Brothers, let's go down,  
Come on down,  
Don't you wanna go down..."*

The lead characters of Delmar, Everett, and Pete gaze wonderingly as the people line up on the river bank in front of the minister who is standing in the water.

It is interesting to see how each character responds to the invitation of the singing Christians...

Everett shares his opinion, "I guess hard times flush the chumps. Everybody's lookin' for answers, and there's always..."

Delmar wades out into the stream, cutting in line. Delmar has reached the minister and holds his nose as the minister motions over him and lowers him into the water.

Pete declares, "Well, I'll be, Delmar's been saved!"

Everett replies, "Pete, don't be ignorant."

Delmar is slogging back through the water. And shares, "Well that's it boys, I been redeemed! The preacher warshed away all my sins and transgressions. It's the straight-and-narrow from here on out and heaven everlasting's my reward!"

Everett again replies, "Delmar what are you talking about? - We got bigger fish to fry..."

Delmar answers, "Preacher said my sins are warshed away, including that Piggly Wiggly I knocked over in Yazoo!"

Everett asks, "I thought you said you were innocent of those charges."

Delmar answers, "Well I was lyin' - and I'm proud to say that that sin's been warshed away too! Neither God nor man's got nothin' on me now! Come on in, boys, the water's fine!"

The scene transitions as the dialog continues-

Everett drives, shaking his head with a forbearing smile. Pete, sitting next to him, and Delmar, in back, are both dripping wet.

Pete is sullen. He speaks, "The preacher said it absolved us."

Everett stands in judgment and question of the commitment of Delmar and Pete. He says, "For him, not for the law! I'm surprised at you, Pete. I gave you credit for more brains than Delmar."

Delmar, "But there were witnesses, saw us redeemed!"

Everett, "That's not the issue, Delmar. Even if it did put you square with the Lord, the State of Mississippi is more hardnosed."

Delmar, "You should a joined us, Everett. It couldn't a hurt none."

Pete, "At least it woulda washed away the stink of that pomade."

Everett, "Join you two ignorant fools in a ridiculous superstition? Thank you anyway. And I like the smell of my hair treatment - the pleasing odor is half the point." He shakes his head and laughs. "Baptism. You two are just dumber'n a bag of hammers. Well, I guess you're my cross to bear..."

Now, Let us look at what the Bible has to say about water baptism...

Romans 6:3-4

"Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The act of immersion in water is more than just an identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. It is a picture of being immersed into the family of God, declaring our testimony and clearing our conscience.

1 Peter 3:21

"The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ."

In the book of Acts, as soon as the Ethiopian heard the good news about Jesus, he wanted to respond.

Acts 8:35-39

"Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. And as they went on *their way*, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing."

Back to the movie- this baptism scene is a good illustration about how people look at life and how people respond to the things of God. Delmar, though stumbling throughout the movie, attempted to respond genuinely to the invitation to meet Jesus and have his sins washed away. Pete was motivated by Delmar's action and his testimony, and also responded. They had a picture that things were now straight before God. Everett saw this act simply as a religious ritual that made his two friends soggy!

Do you identify more with one of these three characters? How will you respond to this invitation..."Come on in, the water is fine?"

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