

God's Use Of Water In Salvation

Joe Slater

Your body is about 60% water. For me, that's around sixteen gallons! Water covers over 70% of Earth's surface. The U.S. Geological Survey says all the water in the atmosphere, on the surface, and under the ground totals over 332 million cubic miles! Obviously, water plays a huge role in our lives.

God has chosen to use water numerous times to bring salvation to people. For example, He used water to save a Syrian leper from his terminal disease (see 2 Kings 5:1-14). H₂O has no inherent healing properties, but God chose to use water to cleanse Naaman when he obeyed by dipping himself seven times in the Jordan.

Peter wrote that Noah & his family *"were saved through water"* (1 Peter 3:20). We usually think of the ark as the instrument that kept them from drowning, but that wasn't Peter's point. God used water to save them from the corrupt world all around them. The New American Standard and English Standard versions totally miss this vital point in their erroneous paraphrase, "brought safely through the water." The text says *"saved by (i.e. by means of) water"*!

Peter went on to say that just as Noah was saved by means of water, *"there is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism"* (1 Peter 3:21). Again, the chemical element H₂O has no power to wash away sin. But God has chosen to use water in His plan to save sinners.

"And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord" (Acts 22:16).

A Penny For Your Thoughts

"For who knows a person's thoughts except the spirit of that person, which is in him" (I Cor. 2:11 ESV).

The saying, "A penny for your thoughts," is from the 14th century, a time when a British penny had great value. Sir Thomas More said, "It often happeneth, that the very face sheweth the mind walking a pilgrimage, in such wise that other folk sodainly say to them a penny for your thought."

It seems that when someone is noticeably deep in thought, others, out of curiosity, are prone to say, "A penny for your thoughts." Most of us might be quick to say, "I don't mind if people know what I'm thinking." But, honestly, are we so sure about that? The spirit of man knows, but what if other people knew? Might there be times when we would rather our parents, our spouse, a friend, a Christian brother, etc., not know what we're thinking?

A writer issued a challenge to try this experiment: notice (really notice), what you're thinking for 24 hours. And imagine that other people could see your thoughts. Scary, isn't it?

Let's face it, we consider ourselves to be a pretty good person, and a good Christian. But in reality, we are not perfect. And if we are honest, we will admit that we sometimes have bad thoughts.

I once expressed, to a friend, my concern about thoughts that would go through my mind. His response to me was, "You can't keep a bird from flying over your head, but you can keep it from nesting in your hair." In other words, don't dwell on any unwanted thoughts. To help prevent this we can do as Paul said, *"Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewal of your mind"* (Rom. 12:2).

Paul also tells us that, *"Whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things"* (Phil. 4:8). Additionally, we should *"take every thought captive to obey Christ"* (II Cor. 10:5).

"The Lord knows the thoughts of man" (Psa. 94:11). Dear reader: A penny for your thoughts.

--Roy Allen Crutcher (Mt. Carmel, IL)

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LOVE OR INFATUATION?

Much that passes for love is nothing more than infatuation, a temporary and, at times, foolish obsession. This is common in childhood, but not unknown in adults. It is quite evident in those who are constantly "falling in and out of love." True love dies hard, while infatuation may be "here today, but gone tomorrow."

There is one love that never fails. It is not the romantic type of love, but a self-giving love. This is the type of love that God has shown toward us. It is also the love that we are to show towards one another. The apostle John declared, *"Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins,"* then adding, *"Beloved, if God so loved us, we ought also to love one another"* (1 John 4:10-11).

God is not infatuated with the human race. Although, through sin, we have offended Him, yet His love endures. If we allow trivial offenses from others to alienate us, we are not showing God's love in our lives.

As for our relationship with God, mere infatuation with Him will put self ahead of Him. Jesus said, *"If ye love me, keep my commandments"* (John 14:15). This is the test to see whether we truly love Him or are simply infatuated with Him.

--Ron Bartanen (via *Bulletin Gold*)