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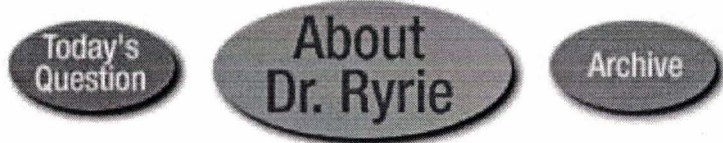


Wednesday, December 10, 1997

Subject: What is the correct mode of baptism?

Dear Dr. Ryrie: Is there a correct mode or method of baptism? More specifically, are the three forms of baptism--immersion, sprinkling, and pouring--all valid? In the same context, is infant baptism a valid expression of the Christian faith? --Jerry K.

Dear Jerry: Each view of the modes of water baptism has arguments it uses as support. That the early church immersed seems clear. To immerse is the primary meaning of the Greek word for baptize. And the Greek language has words for pour and sprinkle, but these are never used in relation to water baptism. Personally, I do not see how infant baptism is valid because baptism is an expression of one's personal faith in Christ, and an infant is simply too young to have made such a profession of faith. So-called household baptisms in the New Testament (as in Acts 16:33) do not specifically include infants, though they may have included children who were old enough to have personally believed.



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