

Mark 16:16 (Misinterpreted Scriptures)

He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

Misinterpretation: The UPC and some other groups often use this Scripture to say that a person must be baptized to be saved.

Facts: The purpose of this discussion is not to talk about whether or not baptism is necessary, but to point out that Mark 16:16 is almost certainly an apocryphal Scripture (meaning that it was probably not part of the original Book of Mark). As a matter of fact, all of verses 9-20 are apocryphal in the 16th chapter of Mark. Most modern English translations put Mark 16:9-20 in brackets to show the reader that those verses were probably not in the original text.

I will not go into all of the reasons that scholars think these 11 verses are apocryphal. Instead, I will point the reader to two very good overviews of the subject. This first is a collection of comments from various study Bibles and commentaries, found at the [Bible Research](#) Web site. This site also offers an article by a scholar who does feel that Mark 16:9-20 was part of the original text, so you can read both sides of the debate. The second is the [Wikipedia article on Mark 16](#). Both of these sites are excellent starting points for you to do your own study into the subject.

Finally, I want to remind you once again that I am not debating baptism here, I am only pointing out that Mark 16:16 should not be used to try to prove the necessity of baptism. Please do not write me with all the reasons you think baptism is necessary! I believe that it is necessary as well (although I do think there are circumstances where a person can be saved

without being baptized [cf. Luke 23:39-43]), so you will be wasting your time by e-mailing me!