

Sunday, October 25, 2020 pm

Why Should I Be Baptized?

The past several months, since this pandemic has altered the way we teach God's word as the Lord's church here in Bellflower, I have tried to present lessons that I believe are for the edification of our members and anyone else who chooses to listen. Hopefully there are others who tune in from time to time. Tonight, I want to present something a little different. I want to present a very basic and doctrinal lesson dealing with our salvation. I want to address why we need to be baptized.

For our members who have obeyed the gospel, this is simply a reminder of God's plan of salvation and WHY we obeyed the gospel (cf. 2 Peter 1:12-15).

But maybe there is someone who is searching for the truth and is wondering what one needs to do to be saved. Perhaps in searching for lessons during this pandemic, someone has come across our web resources (YouTube, Facebook, or our website – www.roseavenue.org) and is searching for answers to salvation. Hopefully, this lesson will answer some of those questions, or at least introduce this important subject.

Maybe as members of this congregation, you have been engaged in conversations, or even a study about salvation with someone. This lesson will be beneficial in explaining some of these things. So let us take a few moments to talk about baptism as part of God's plan of salvation.

I. Preliminary observations

- a. What is baptism? A word that means to immerse or dip.
- b. Baptism ALONE does NOT save us.
 - i. First and foremost we need the grace God. It is the PRIME factor in our salvation – Ephesians 2:8-9, Titus 2:11.
 - ii. **We need faith to be baptized.** Jesus said, "If you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." (John 8:24)
Mark 16:16 – baptism is for believers who understand what they are doing and why. That is why we should not baptize infants. It is wrong and thus a sinful practice. An infant cannot believe.
 - iii. **In baptism we do NOT earn our salvation** – some dismiss baptism because they say it is a work. In one sense it is, but not the way they mean it.
 1. In baptism we are doing something – namely we are OBEYING what God tells us to do.
Obedience IS necessary – Hebrews 5:9, Matthew 7:21-23, etc. cf. 2 Thessalonians 1:8, etc.
So, if by works you mean you take action – then yes it is a work. But so is faith – 1 Thessalonians 1:3, John 6:28-29, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent." And when you consider that believing is an action (a verb), you are doing something.
ALSO, confession is an action – Romans 10:9-10 – both confession and belief are verbs – they are actions.
Furthermore, consider James 2:17. James is emphasizing the importance of a faith that responds and obeys. Consider James 2:24.
 2. But often what is implied when one says baptism is a work, they say we believe in works salvation. No! I believe in obeying what God says. Salvation by works means that IF we do the works, we EARN our salvation. That is simply not true. None will EVER earn their salvation.
 - iv. God's plan of salvation (our response) also includes:

1. **Hearing the word** – Romans 10:17 – that is where our faith comes from. (Hebrews 11:6). How can you believe without hearing God’s word? (cf. 14-17)
2. **We must believe** as already noted – this is fundamental, and should be obvious. Mark 16:16, Acts 2:37, Acts 16:30-31.
In fact it is so fundamental, that sometimes the term “believe” is used to describe the whole process – again Acts 16:31-33; Also consider Acts 18:8 which speaks of Crispus, the ruler of the Synagogue “believed on the Lord”. The text then mentions others heard, believed and were baptized. However please consider 1 Corinthians 1:14 where Paul notes that he specifically baptized Crispus and a few others. This shows how the term “believe” can be an inclusive term that summarizes everything one does to be saved.
3. **We must repent** – a word which demonstrates a change in direction in one’s life. To become a Christian you need to renounce the ways of this world
4. **We must also confess Jesus as Christ and Lord.** A willingness to acknowledge publicly our faith in Him to save us. Romans 10:9-10. Acts 8:37 also describes what one confesses in becoming a child of God.
5. **After all these things we come to the subject of baptism.** So let us notice some passages of scripture about baptism and then you tell me, what we need to do.

II. Why be baptized?

- a. Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:16 - “the great commission”. Jesus commissioned His apostles to go and make disciples, baptizing them and teaching them to observe all things commanded. Mark notes that this baptism leads to salvation.
- b. Romans 6:3-4 – describes how baptism is burial and how in baptism we come in contact with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. Those events were associated with the sacrifice Jesus made for our sins (John 3:16, Romans 5:6-8, 1 Corinthians 15:3, etc.
- c. Galatians 3:27 – as many as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
- d. Colossians 2:12 – in Him we receive true circumcision, “*buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised with Him through faith...*”
- e. 1 Peter 3:20-21 – baptism now save us... baptism now saves us. We also find in this text, WATER. The element of true baptism.
- f. Conversion in the book of Acts. When someone heard the gospel, they would respond by being baptized.
 - i. Pentecost – Acts 2:37-41 – note that those who “gladly received his word were baptized.”
 - ii. The Samaritans – Acts 8:12-13, when they believed Philip, they were baptized, both men and women. Including Simon the sorcerer (vs. 13), though he stumbled.
 - iii. The Eunuch – Acts 8:35-38, when Philip preached Christ, they came upon a body of water and the eunuch requested baptism. Philip consented based upon his belief and confession
 - iv. Cornelius – Acts 10:1-2 a Gentile centurion who believed in God and did many good works. Yet he needed salvation. Peter was sent to him – Acts 10:47-48, after preaching and some other events, we read that Peter commanded him to be baptized in the name of the Lord.
 - v. Lydia and her household – Acts 16:14-15 – hearing Paul’s preaching, the Lord opened her heart and she was baptized and her household.
 - vi. The Philippian jailer – Acts 16:31-34.
 - vii. The Corinthians - Acts 18:8 – we read of Crispus believing and many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.
 - viii. The Ephesians – Acts 19:4-5 – some who had been wrongly baptized were baptized for the right reason.

- ix. And Paul – Acts 9:18, 22:16 – praying for 3 days in Damascus, Ananias came to him and instructed him to be baptized. Paul complied immediately.
- x. ALL these examples combined, give us overwhelming evidence that we MUST be baptized to be saved and have our sins forgiven. NOTICE again in this book how many responded AFTER they were baptized.

Friends, much more could be said about this. We do not teach the necessity of baptism to be different. We teach it because it is what the Bible says. Is that enough reason for you? Think about it, and is there some way we can help you?