

Sunday, June 5, 2022 pm

STUDIES IN 1 PETER (21)

Baptism Now Saves Us

1 Peter 3:20-22

We are continuing our study of 1 Peter, a letter in which Peter is encouraging brethren who are facing trials and persecutions to remain faithful to God. We have noted several principles including a need to submit to others as well as setting oneself apart to God. Our last lesson addressed a most controversial text that involved where Jesus went when He died on the cross. It is my belief that He went to the hadean world (paradise, not torments or hell) along with the saved thief. In His appearance there and His removal at resurrection preached the gospel as judgment to both the righteous and wicked, confirming their just belonging where they were. The example of Noah had reference to a time of judgment, one which Peter's audience (and we still) waited for.

We now come to another controversial passage, not so much because of what it teaches (because it is straightforward) but because of its theological implications to a religious world that wants to dismiss the need for man to do anything in regard to his own salvation. In other words, those who reject the need for baptism in order to be saved. In this lesson, we are going to talk about this by examining the text and then talk a little about baptism as it relates to our salvation.

I. The Text

- a. Eight souls saved through water – a reference to Noah and his family. As noted in our previous lesson, this was a small remnant. Often the saved involve only a few. Matthew 7:14 reminds us of this. Also Matthew 22:14.
- b. Water was also instrumental in their salvation. One observation to be made about the water that floated the ark – it was a cleansing agent - it cleansed the earth of its corruption. This is one way we can compare our salvation to that of Noah – Acts 22:16.
- c. There is also an antitype which now saves us –
 - i. The Greek word used here is ἀντίτυπος, (antitypos). It is the antithesis of the word τύπος, (typos) which has reference to the imprint made by a stamp – a copy or type of something. The stamp itself is not the type (or copy, or “shadow”), but the real thing. *Antitypos* is the “stamp” or real thing.
 - ii. A study of the LOM finds many types. When God gave instructions for the building of the tabernacle and virtually everything in it, they were a TYPE of the heavenly tabernacle that Jesus would enter into once for all (Hebrews 9:1-5, 9, 11).
 - iii. It is worthy of note that not everything about a type is necessarily exact. There may be elements that are intended in the type, but other things that differentiate.
 - iv. In our text, it is important to understand that what Peter is EQUATING to that of Noah is the usage of water in saving them. Water made the ark float while the rest of the earth was destroyed and rejuvenated.
- d. Baptism now saves us – “now” is a verb meaning “at this present time”. Peter is CLEARLY associating baptism with salvation. This is something we will address in awhile.
- e. Not the removal of the filth of the flesh – it is not about the outward washing, though that is certainly taking place.
 - i. Baptism is not about getting wet.
 - ii. One source noted that we MUST emphasize it is NOT the water that saves us, but the act of baptism (what we do IN the water and WHY).
 - iii. Some say that because we believe baptism is necessary for salvation that we are teaching water salvation. That is NOT true. There is nothing special about the water (it is not “holy

water”). It is the action that leads to the result. We simply immerse in water for one reason – GOD SAID to do it!

- iv. And even then, it is not about us, but God – Colossians 2:12 notes that we are, *buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.*
- f. But the answer of a good conscience toward God – at least 2 things come to my mind in this.
 - i. We are convicted of sin and realize we need to submit to God’s will to have our sins removed – cf. Acts 2:37 – they were cut to the heart. (Cf. Matthew 5:3, Romans 7:24-25, etc.). Notice also Acts 8:35-39 – the Eunuch did not want to wait. Acts 16:33 – the jailer was baptized, “the same hour of the night” “immediately”. If you realize you are lost, you want it taken care of NOW! Would you say that is a good conscience?
 - ii. By faith, we believe that if we do what God tells us to do (we obey His instructions), He will do what He has promised – cleanse us of our sins, thus cleansing our guilty conscience because of the awareness of sin. Hence, the eunuch went on his way rejoicing (Acts 8:39), The jailer rejoiced “having believed in God, with all his household” (Acts 16:34).
- g. Through the resurrection of Jesus Christ – while it is His death (the shedding of His blood) that accomplished our forgiveness, it is His resurrection that gives us hope. If there is no resurrection, so what if we are forgiven. Consider 1 Corinthians 15:13-17.
- h. What has gone into heaven... - where He now reigns. Jesus is in heaven ruling as our king, interceding on our behalf, etc. Hebrews 7:25 – He always lives to make intercession for them (us). Romans 8:34 – intercession for us; Hebrews 4:14-16 – he sympathizes with our weaknesses.

II. **Baptism as it relates to our salvation**

- a. It involves water – that is clearly defined in our text. We know from this that THE baptism being addressed AND the baptism associated with our salvation is that which is done in water.
- b. It involves immersion – the very word, βαπτίζω (baptizo) baptize, is from the Greek and means to dip or submerge. It CANNOT mean to pour or sprinkle.
 - i. Romans 6:3-4 – baptism is a burial,
 - ii. Acts 8:38-39 – they went into the water and came out of the water. John baptized in Aenon because “there was much water there” (John 3:23).
- c. It involves one consciously aware of what he is doing – this negates infant baptism and baptism by proxy.
- d. What does baptism do for us?
 - i. Mark 16:16, Matthew 28:19-20 – the great commission.
 - ii. Acts 2:38 – for the remission of sins
 - iii. Acts 22:16 – wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord
 - iv. Romans 6:3-4 – buried with Him through baptism into death...
- e. Some thoughts to understand about baptism
 - i. **This does NOT negate the grace of God** – Ephesians 2:8-9. Grace (and mercy) simply describe God’s part in our salvation. This is the PRIME factor in salvation. Without grace, faith and obedience are meaningless.
 - ii. **This does NOT negate our faith** – even our text associates this with a comprehending conscience. Mark 16:16 – believe and be baptized; Acts 18:8 speaks of Crispus believing with his household. NOTE 1 Corinthians 1:14 – notes that Paul did baptize him.
 - iii. **There is a difference between meritorious works and obedience.** Meritorious works means that act so as to earn something. You deserve it. Obedience, while it CAN be a meritorious act, often involves actions made because of love, faith, respect, purity of heart, etc. When we obey the gospel, following God’s instructions – which includes baptism – we are merely obeying God. We are not earning anything.

And thus we can see the emphasis Peter is making in our text. It is a passage that unequivocally teaches we need to be baptized unto the forgiveness of our sins. But in that we are merely obeying God AND we have hope as we face a hostile world. Thus this is yet another reason to endure. What about you? Have you obeyed God's instructions in becoming a Christian? Does that obedience give you purpose and hope? Think about it?