

4th & Stewart church of Christ

"...upon this rock I will build my church;
and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."
~ Matthew 16:18



December 22, 2013

Contact Us:

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Meeting Times:

Sunday:

Bible Study 9:45 AM
Worship..... 10:40 AM
Care, Inc. Service..... 2:30 PM
Worship..... 6:00 PM

Tuesday:

Redstone Class..... 9:30 AM

Wednesday:

Ladies Bible Class On Break
Bible Study 7:00 PM

Elders:

Gene Bannister..... Billy Chism

Deacons:

Mike Bannister..... Jim Moore

Don Smith..... James Thomas

Preacher:

Johnny McCaghren

Works We Support:

Cherokee Home for Children
Gospel Broadcast Network
Heart of Texas Bible Camp (Bangs)
House to House, Heart to Heart
Mission Printing
Rohan Jones, Africa
The Truth in Love
World Bible School

Let us know if you want to study
the Bible to know more about
Christ and His Church.

Is Baptism "Because of" the Forgiveness of Sins?

(Why Baptism Matters Series)

By Chris McCurley



We continue our study on the essential nature of baptism as it relates to salvation. Though the Bible is replete with passages conveying the importance of baptism, many quickly dismiss it as a condition for salvation. Consider that *believe* and *faith* are mentioned 483 times in the New Testament. *Repent* or *repentance* is mentioned 56 times. *Confess* or *confession* 32 times. And *baptize* or *baptism* is mentioned 77 times. In fact, aside from *belief* and *faith*, *baptism* appears more times

in scripture than any of the other conditions of salvation that are so readily accepted.

The myriad of clear and concise passages signifying the fact that baptism is vital to salvation of the soul has not deterred some from going to great lengths in an effort to refute it. One of the more outlandish arguments given in opposition to the soul-saving aspect of baptism is that it's NOT *for* the forgiveness of sins but, rather, *because of* the forgiveness of sins. The so-called scriptural basis for such an argument is said to be Acts 2:38, a common proof-text arguing in favor of baptism for the purpose of salvation. It reads:

"Peter said to them, 'Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

Prior to this statement from Peter, the people who had gathered to hear him preach about the Christ were pricked to the heart. They felt compelled to seek salvation. They knew something had to be done. And so they asked, "Brethren, what shall we do" (Acts 2:37)? Peter's response could not be clearer, but in an effort to cling to a misguided notion, some have attempted to twist the original language in Acts 2:38 to fit their man-made doctrine. The word "for" in this passage is said to mean "because of," thus pointing to the fact that baptism is not necessary *for* salvation but *because of* salvation. In other words, baptism is an afterthought, not a pre-

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All flesh is grass, and all its loveliness is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, because the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades, but the word of our God stands forever.

Isaiah 40:6b-8

Remember Why Christ Was Born

By Rick Austin

Christmas is, without a doubt, a wonderful time of the year. It is filled with the warmth of fellowship over holiday foods, parties and gifts. It brings people's hearts to an awareness of God's gift of His Son like no other season. But there is more to Christmas than just a day of celebration.

The truth is that people often get all caught up in the "story" of Jesus' birth. We revel in the "tender" side of God's nature, putting aside thoughts of sin and righteousness. Some even dress up their kids in costumes and post them out in the cold weather so others can drive by and view the "manger scene." This picture, coupled with angelic-sounding songs such as "Silent Night" and rustic shepherds awed into humble praise of the newborn Christ-child is too much to resist. Do not misunderstand. This aspect of Jesus' story is important, even vital, to understanding the Messiah, the Savior, God among us.

It is here that we must make a necessary point, however. The biblical focus on Jesus Christ is not on His birth. Naturally, it is important and everything from angels' announcements to Mary and Joseph, to Simeon's Holy Spirit-inspired prophecy of the identity of the Messiah, to the angelic chorus singing praise at His birth declares that the arrival of Jesus into the world was a fantastic event!

Still, the focus is not there. The real focus is some thirty years later, at an execution scene. There was not a tender moment at that place to cause us to sigh in wonder. Instead, the air was ripe with evil. Man's disdain for his God ruled the day as the Son of God was discarded in hatred. The baby of the manger was murdered, charged like a common criminal. Sorrow and fear gripped His family and His disciples, and for a brief moment, it ap-

peared that the great promises of God, the hope of Israel, the glimmer of grace and mercy to all mankind, would all be lost.

But there is a reason why that death scene is the focus. Birth brought God's Son into the world and gave Him a body of flesh. Birth is what brought into being a Man, a Man with a body, and a body designed from before creation itself to die as a sacrifice. The reason the cross is the focus is because of what was done when the baby who lay in the manger became a man who could give Himself as a sacrifice for sin. My sin! Your sin!

It was the blood of His death that cleansed the sin-stained souls who put Him on the cross. It was the agony of death that reflected the true nature of sin and its consequences. This was a man born to die, and that's the point!

I am grateful for the magnificence of the "Christmas story," but I am even more grateful that He died to take away my sins. That was not done in the manger, it was done on the cross. The truth is that an old, rugged cross will never have the appeal of an old, rugged manger. The sorrow of Heaven that put the world into darkness and split the veil of the temple will never compete with the angelic choir or the praising shepherds or the honoring wise men. We can dress up our kids and put them in a manger scene, but who would want their child to get picked to be Jesus on the day of His death?

So I understand the relative appeal of one scene over the other. My plea is that you simply remember *why* He was born. It is in the purpose of His life that you will find a permanent reason to rejoice. There was born in the city of David, a child who was, and is, the Savior, Christ, the Lord.

Television

The Truth In Love (Robert Dodson)
Sunday @ 7:00 am on KTAB
In Search of the Lord's Way
Sunday @ 7:30 am on KTAB
Gospel Broadcasting Network
Online: 24/7 @ gbntv.org and on Roku
TV: Sunday @ 6:30 am on
Dish: 267, DirectTV: 376

Radio

Preaching the Word (Michael Light)
Sunday @ 9:00am on KOXE 101.3

God's Plan for Redeeming Man

Hear Learn the saving message of Christ's sacrifice (1 Cor. 1:18; Rom. 10:17).
Believe Jesus is the Son of God (John 8:24)
Confess Jesus as your Lord, Lawgiver, and King (Rom. 10:9-10; Matt. 10:32-33)
Repent of your sinful conduct (Luke 13:3,5)
Complete your initial obedience to the gospel by being **baptized** for the forgiveness of your sins (Acts 2:38; 22:16)
Live faithfully (Rev. 2:10; 2 Tim. 4:7-8)

Bible Study Schedule

Week 104
Psalm 141-146
& Hebrews 3-4

Study sheets are available at the back of the auditorium.

"Be diligent to present yourself approved to God, a worker who does not need to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth."

(2 Timothy 2:15)



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requisite to being saved.

The Greek term “for” is the word *eis*, and it is found some 1750 times in the New Testament. This little word ALWAYS carries the idea of looking forward. It is “an indicator of direction toward a goal, not as an indicator of location without direction” (Balz & Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament*, Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1978, Vol. I, p. 398). *Eis* is a preposition used with the accusative case, meaning that it points to the object of verbal action. This word is generally translated as *in, into, unto, to, toward*, etc. And so, according to scripture, when one is baptized he or she is baptized *into* or *unto* something. What is that something? Peter is clear that it is “the remission of sins.” Jesus uses the same terminology in Matthew 26:28 where it reads: “[F]or this is My blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for forgiveness of sins.”

Here we have the identical construction of the term *eis*, conjoined with the phrase “forgiveness of sins,” as seen in Acts 2:38. Jesus is literally saying, “...*this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many unto remission of sins.*”

And what about repentance? Peter’s answer to the question, “What shall we do (to be saved)?” doesn’t just include baptism; he admonishes them to repent as well. Does this mean that their repentance was “because of” forgiveness of sins also? Does it make any sense that one should repent because their sins have already been forgiven? But one cannot argue that baptism is “because of” the forgiveness of sins without arguing the same concerning repentance.

My friends, the original language doesn’t lie. To suggest that *eis* means “because of” is not bad Greek; it’s not Greek at all!

Visitation Meeting

Remember our visitation meeting each Sunday night following the evening worship to sign cards and discuss the work going on. Last week **58 contacts** were made.

Special Announcements

- ◆ **Christmas Bags:** We will not be delivering Christmas bags this year, but we wish a very Merry Christmas to all.
- ◆ **Dec. 31: New Year’s Eve Party** at the building. Starting at 6 PM till whenever. Bring games, food, etc. and come enjoy a good time together as we welcome the new year.
- ◆ **Gospel Meeting with Loy Mitchell:** May 11-14, 2014.

Celebrate

“Rejoice with those who rejoice...” (Romans 12:15)

December Birthdays: Freda Cox (05), Estelle Guthrie (07), Laverne Thomas (13), Veneta Nolen (17), Kaci Churchwell (18), Priscilla Smithey (18), Linda Griffith (20), Mia Stroope (22), Joyce Hill (24), John McCaghren (27).

December Anniversaries: Linda & Allen Griffith (20), Phyllis & Horace Hooper (24), Jo & Ken Maninger (25).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...



Records

	Dec. 8, 2013	Dec. 15, 2013
Bible Class	26	45
AM Worship	36	59
PM Worship	Cancelled	47
Wednesday PM	45	43
Contribution	\$809	\$2345

Privileged To Serve

"...be ready to every good work" (Titus 3:1)

		This Week: 12/22/13	Next Week: 12/29/13		December 2013 Make Announcements: Joe Dennis Prepare Communion: Jim & Peg Moore Clean Building: Jessica Stultz Keep Grounds: Tom Wilcox January 2014 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: Don & Darlene Smith Clean Building: Jim & Peg Moore Keep Grounds: James Fuller	
Sunday AM:		Song Leader: James Fuller		Song Leader: Tom Wilcox		
Greeters	John and Tina Barnum		Allen and Linda Griffith			
Opening Prayer	Tom Wilcox		James Fuller			
Communion	Don Smith*, Chase Churchwell Ken Maninger, Gene Bannister		Allen Griffith*, Jim Moore Ken Maninger, Hank Wheeler			
Closing Prayer	Jim Moore		John Barnum			
Attendance Cards	Chase Churchwell		Caleb Dennis			
Sunday PM:		Song Leader: James Fuller		Song Leader: Tom Wilcox		
Opening Prayer	Hank Wheeler		Joe Dennis			
Scripture Reading	Joe Dennis		Jim Moore			
Communion	Don Smith		Allen Griffith			
Closing Prayer	Billy Chism		Garrett Barnum			
Wednesday Devotionals:	December 25 Jim Moore		January 1 Joe Dennis		January 8 Allen Griffith January 15 Johnny McCaghren	

Search the Scriptures

Be like the Bereans who "received the word with all readiness of mind, and searched the scriptures daily, whether those things were so." (Acts 17:11)

Studies for the week of December 22, 2013		Sunday Class Identity of the New Testament Church Wednesday PM Mark: Chapters 1 & 2	
<p style="text-align: center;">Nathan's Rebuke Text: 2 Samuel 12:1-15</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ We are often blind to our own faults <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ David could easily see the sin in the man of Nathan's story (5,6), but not in himself (7). ◆ It is often easier for us to see the "mote" in another's eye, than to see the "beam" in our own eye. ◆ Because we are often blind to our own faults, we need friends like Nathan, and attitudes like David. ◆ The best way to bring about repentance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Appeal to God's love (7,8, Rom 2:4; Acts 10:34-36,42,43). ◆ Reveal the sin (9). ◆ Warn of the consequences (10-12). ◆ The proper attitude in repentance. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ David provides the proper example (13). ◆ Much repentance today falls short in this regard. ◆ The pardon provided by God. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The example of David's forgiveness (13). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Immediate and complete—when the proper conditions are met. ◆ God's pardon is similar today. ◆ Consequences of sin often follow despite pardon. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ David learned this from Nathan (10-12,14). ◆ The same is often true today. ◆ May we be wise enough to heed the counsel of "Nathan's Rebuke." 	<p style="text-align: center;">Unleashing God's Word In Your Life Lesson 2—About the Author</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ God is the author of what Scripture records; the Bible is the very Word of God. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Revelation = the message. ◆ Inspiration = the primary method of delivering that message to mankind. ◆ What inspiration is <u>not</u>: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ A high level of human achievement. ◆ Limited to the thoughts of the writers. ◆ The act of God on the reader. ◆ Mechanical dictation. ◆ The elements of inspiration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God" (2 Tim 3:16). ◆ "God-breathed" - <i>theopneustos</i> = God + breath. ◆ "All" - <i>pasa</i> = every. ◆ "Scripture" - <i>graphe</i> = writing. ◆ Inspiration is God's revelation communicated to us through writers who used their own minds—plenary verbal inspiration. ◆ The results of inspiration. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The Bible is infallible, inerrant, complete, authoritative, sufficient, and effective. ◆ "He who is of God hears God's words; therefore you do not hear, because you are not of God" (Jn 8:47) 		