



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 a Work?

(Why Baptism Matters Series)

By Chris McCurley

Throughout this series we have been examining the necessity of baptism as it applies to salvation. Unfortunately, many folks have dismissed baptism as an essential component in the scheme of redemption, though the Bible explicitly states that it is directly connected to one's salvation (Acts 2:38; Mk. 16:16; 1 Pet. 3:21). It has been my objective, over the last few weeks, to magnify what God's Word has to say concerning this vital subject. Baptism has been watered down and greatly diluted. The waters have been muddied. Much confusion exists. I hope and pray that all of us will set aside our preconceived notions, our per-

sonal prejudices, our denominational ties, and openly and honestly study what the scriptures have to say.

Undoubtedly, questions will arise. One such question that always seems to come to the surface is this—IS BAPTISM A WORK? Some would argue that by holding the view that baptism is essential to salvation, one is adhering to a “works-based” faith. Salvation is a free gift, they say. One cannot earn it. Faith is what saves; therefore, if one submits to the idea that baptism is necessary for salvation then he is attempting to “work” his way into heaven. A common proof-text for this argument is Ephesians 2:8-10. There Paul writes:

“For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.”

First of all, there is no denying that salvation is a free gift from God. There is absolutely nothing that you or I could ever do to deserve this gift. Jesus paid the debt that we could never pay. However, while grace is a free gift, that doesn't mean that we are exempt from responsibility. Grace is a gift, which implies a giver. And, a gift is not truly a gift until it is received. While the gift is free, we can reject it. We can refuse it. With the gift of grace come conditions. We must accept the conditions in order to accept the gift. By accepting the conditions, we are not performing any works of merit for the purpose of earning the Giver's favor. We are simply responding out of love.

Salvation is wholly dependent upon God. BUT, grace had to act. There is no savior without a cross. Grace had to act in order to give. Likewise, we must act in order to receive. If grace had not acted, man could never have been saved. Likewise, if we do not act we cannot be saved either. Faith is the proper response to the grace of God. Grace describes God's part in salvation, but we have a part as well. It is faith. Faith does indeed save, but only the type of faith that acts.

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My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because you have rejected knowledge, I reject you from being a priest to me. And since you have forgotten the law of your God, I also will forget your children.

Hosea 4:6

Indecision keeps us from participating in the victory

By J. Randal Matheny

They were called to war. But they stayed home discussing what to do. For their “great indecision,” they did not go to the front, but sat among the flocks listening to the whistles of the shepherds. They missed out on Israel’s victory! What a shameful moment for the tribe of Reuben! (For this story, see Judges 5.15-16)

Some Bible versions translated their great indecision as great searches of the heart, or they thought long and hard about it. So long in fact, that they never got up and went. Perhaps they even affirmed their decision, but they failed to grab their arms and go to war.

The tribe of Reuben did not send a letter to their brethren declining to participate. They only made great speeches or debated among themselves about the propriety of the conflict.

Sounds familiar, doesn’t it?

- *Am I going to church today?*
- *One of these days I’m going to become a Christian.*
- *Very soon I’ll follow Jesus.*
- *We need to think carefully about getting involved in missions.*
- *I really need to get out of this compromising situation.*

The deliberations come in all shapes and sizes. Indecision appears with many faces. But they are all mere words. Action is lacking. Commitment is missing. Like the tribe of Reuben, many remain among the flocks in a constant state of indecision and heated debate.

For many, indecision saves people from obligation. Passivity becomes the easy way of refusal. Be it for fear or laziness or love of the world, lack of action responds to the call of Christ with a negative answer.

A popular website recently published an article titled, “Eight ways to say ‘yes’.” In the spiritual realm, there are a thousand ways to refuse God’s call. Indecision is one of those ways. But there is only one way to accept the gospel: obedient faith in Christ Jesus.

Indecision often bloats life with many activities, in order to prevent one from thinking about the invitation to follow the Master. People invent excuses of caring for parents, seeing about their properties and possessions, taking care of business (see Luke 9.56.62 and 14.15-24). We fill life with things and tasks, and we lose the abundant life that Christ offers.

Jesus said, ““Anyone who isn’t with me opposes me, and anyone who isn’t working with me is actually working against me” (Matthew 12.30).

A Thank You Letter from Mission Printing

Mission Printing would like to offer its sincere and deepest appreciation for your support of this work. Your gift will be used to bring the saving message to lost souls around the world.

As we come to the end of another year, Mission Printing has been truly blessed. Our dedicated volunteers have been working hard in printing, folding, collating, stapling, trimming, boxing and shipping all the material that has been completed over the course of 2013. We shipped three ocean containers of tracts to Africa, plus seven pallets of tracts to Liberia and the Philippines. All of this adds up to around 130,000 pounds of tracts that were sent to help spread the gospel. We are already working on the material for the next ocean container.

Mission Printing lost many of our long term volunteers and supporters in 2013. Some due to sickness, others to death. They will be greatly missed but have fought the fight and finished the race (2 Timothy 4:7).

Richard Renfro, vice president of the board, has several trips planned for the early part of 2014. He is going to Haiti, hopefully Jamaica and to Cameroon. He wants to check on the possibility of sending either pallets or ocean containers into each place.

Mission Printing would like to say “THANK YOU” to the individuals and congregations who financially supported this work in 2013. We hope you will continue to be a part of the Mission Printing family in the coming year. This work could not continue without all of our dedicated volunteers and contributors. There is always plenty of work to be done.

We hope you had a very Happy Holiday and New Year.

Mary Carroll
Office Manager

New Spiritual Sword

New editions of the Spiritual Sword are available on the back table and at the exits. Make sure you pick one up and study it with an open Bible. Then keep it for reference or pass it along for someone else to study! The theme is “**Important Events In Church History.**”

January 2014 Newsletter from Rohan Jones

Available on the back bulletin board. Extra copies available.

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 108
Proverbs 15—20
& Hebrews 11—12
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)



(Continued from page 1)

Gift does not exclude a human response. We, humans, must respond to the free gift of grace through obedience. We must believe, and our belief must move us to take action. The actions we take are the works of faith, and scripture is clear that one cannot have faith without works. A faith without works is a dead faith. James stated as much in James 2:24 and again in verse 26 when he wrote, "You see that a man is justified by works and not by faith alone...For just as the body without the spirit is dead, so also faith without works is dead." James is not referring to works of merit. He is speaking of works of obedience that come from a faith that seeks to do God's will in all things. Works cannot be divorced from faith. The two are inseparably tied together. One cannot exist without the other. Works are not an enemy to faith or grace. Works are essential.

In Ephesians 2:8-10 two different types of works are mentioned. The first instance (v. 9) is speaking of meritorious works. Paul makes clear that the gift of grace did not come about because of anything we have done. This free gift is solely based upon what God has done for sinful man. The second instance of "works" (v. 10) is referring to Christ-like deeds, or works of faith done out of loving obedience. These works do not earn the free gift of grace either. Instead, they are a response to the free gift, and they are a result of faith. Notice that Paul says, "For by grace you have been saved through faith" (v. 8). Paul's not teaching faith without works. He's pointing out the difference between works of merit and works of faith. It's one thing to attempt to get to heaven simply by doing good works. It's another to humbly accept God's free gift and submit to His commands.

What so many people fail to realize is that a gift can be conditional without any meritorious effort on the part of the recipient. The free gift of grace has been offered to all (Titus 2:11), but not everyone is saved. In order to accept the gift and, thus, be saved I must accept the conditions. I must respond, and the way I respond is through faith. Salvation comes through faith, a faith that works; not in order to gain merit, but to be obedient to the will of God. God demands that our faith manifest itself in obedience through repentance, confession and baptism for the remission of sins. These are works of faith. In fact, faith itself is a work (Read John 6:27-29). A working faith is a living faith (not dead) because it is a faith that does the will of God. This is not for the purpose of earning God's free gift, but for the purpose of obeying the conditions for receiving the gift.

Baptism is a work; however, it is not a work of merit. it is a work of faith. It is the proper response to faith in our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Visitation Meeting

- ◆ Each Sunday night following the evening worship. Last week **31 contacts** were made.

Special Announcements

- ◆ Services @ **Vicksburg** this afternoon.
- ◆ **3rd Sunday finger foods** after evening services **cancelled** until further notice.
- ◆ **Gospel Meeting with Loy Mitchell: May 11-14, 2014.**

In The Area

- ◆ Jan. 26—**Bible Bowl** @ Dublin
- ◆ Feb. 2—**Michael Shank** (*Muscle and a Shovel*) @ Hico—5pm & 6pm
- ◆ Feb. 9-12—**Equip Seminar** @ Oldham Lane in Abilene (Steve Higginbotham)
- ◆ Apr. 6-9—**Gospel Meeting** @ Hamilton (Mike Vestal)
- ◆ Apr. 6-9—**Gospel Meeting** @ Deleon (Paul Shero)
- ◆ Apr. 20-23—**Gospel Meeting** @ San Angelo (BJ Clarke)
- ◆ May 4-7—**Gospel Meeting** @ Gordon (Michael Light)
- ◆ Jun. 29-Jul. 3—**Junior Camp**
- ◆ Jul. 20-25—**Senior Camp**

Celebrate

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

January Birthdays: Bennie White (16), Tom Wilcox (17), Anita Boyd (19), Jaceton Evetts (22), Lily Martinez (22), Mattison Churchwell (25), Judie Turner (29), Charles White (30).

January Anniversaries: Jim and Peggy Moore (22).

Mistakes? Left Out? Let Johnny know...

Records

	Jan. 5, 2014	Jan. 12, 2014
Bible Class	40	45
AM Worship	59	60
PM Worship	41	43
Wednesday PM	42	47
Contribution	\$1643	\$1874



Privileged To Serve

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

	This Week: 1/19/14	Next Week: 1/26/14		
Sunday AM:	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	Song Leader: Mike Bannister	January 2014 Make Announcements: Ken Maninger Prepare Communion: Don & Darlene Smith Clean Building: Jim & Peg Moore Keep Grounds: James Fuller February 2014 Make Announcements: Jim Moore Prepare Communion: Johnny & Cindy McCaghren Clean Building: John Barnum Family Keep Grounds: Tom Wilcox	
Greeters	Joe and Lasha Dennis	Allen and Linda Griffith		
Opening Prayer	Joe Dennis	Jim Moore		
Communion	Don Smith*, Hank Wheeler Jim Moore, Gene Bannister	Joe Dennis*, Ken Maninger John Barnum, Chase Churchwell		
Closing Prayer	Don Smith	Hank Wheeler		
Attendance Cards	Caleb Dennis	Chase Churchwell		
Sunday PM:	Song Leader: James Fuller	Song Leader: Tom Wilcox		
Opening Prayer	Billy Chism	Mike Bannister		
Scripture Reading	Tom Wilcox	Garrett Barnum		
Communion	Don Smith	Joe Dennis		
Closing Prayer	Gene Bannister	James Thomas		
Wednesday Devotionals:	January 22 Tom Wilcox	January 29 Kevin Wilcox	February 5 Garrett Barnum	February 12 Don Smith

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 January 12, 2014		Sunday Class Identity of the New Testament Church
		Wednesday PM Mark: Chapters 3-4
<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Unprofitable and Useless Servants</i> <i>Text: Titus 1:15,16</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Have you ever wondered how God views you as His servant? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Not all servants are viewed the same—some will be honor, while others will be cast out. ◆ What can we learn from Paul’s words to Titus? ◆ Godly elders are necessary to regulate the conduct of members of the congregation (vs. 5-9) ◆ The heart that is not transformed is filled with evil. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Becoming a Christian requires a change from the inside out. (Rom. 12:2; 2 Cor. 5:17) ◆ Without Christ in one’s heart, the world totally corrupts his heart. (Jer. 17:9) ◆ Unconverted people in the church do great harm to the cause of Christ. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Most congregations have some members who have not truly become disciples of Christ. ◆ Those unconverted church members who live like the devil hurt God’s church. ◆ Those Christians who live like people in the world are not acceptable to God. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ What a horrible thing to have God view a person as “abominable” (v. 16). ◆ God considers those Christians who live like people in the world as “unprofitable.” ◆ Are you a profitable and useful servant for the Lord? 	<p style="text-align: center;"><i>Unleashing God’s Word In Your Life</i> <i>Lesson 6—Jesus’ Word on the Word</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ Can you believe in Christ but not in the authority and infallibility of the Bible? ◆ The Deity and Authority of Christ <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ The apostles understood Jesus’ authority, as did John the Baptist and others who heard Jesus teach. ◆ He did not use the “thus saith the Lord” of the prophets, He said “I say unto you.” ◆ Jesus put His stamp of approval on the OT in several ways. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ He acknowledged all Scripture pointed to Him. ◆ He came to fulfill all Scripture. ◆ Scripture would endure as long as the universe endures. ◆ He validated OT people and events. ◆ Interestingly, Jesus never quoted any of the apocryphal works. ◆ What about the “Theory of Accommodation”? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ This theory states that Jesus did not really believe the OT, but accommodated its teaching because it was commonly accepted by the Jews. ◆ This theory has several fallacies. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◆ It allows for a subjective view of Jesus’ teaching. ◆ Jesus’ dealing with the scribes and Pharisees. ◆ The character of Jesus. ◆ Christ’s use of the OT. ◆ The obvious conclusion is that Jesus accepted the OT authority and passed that same authority on to the NT. 	