

God's Plan for Man's Salvation

PLEASE OBSERVE:

1. On the day of Pentecost, the people asked in **Acts 2:37**, "Men and brethren, What shall we do?" Peter answered them.
2. In **Acts 8:37**, the eunuch from Ethiopia asked, "See here is water. What hinders men from being baptized?" And Philip answered him
3. On the road to Damascus, Saul asked in **Acts 9:5**, "Lord, what do you want me to do?" Jesus provided Ananias to answer Saul.
4. In Philippi, the Jailor asked in **Acts 16:30**, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" And Paul and Silas answered him.

CONTINUE TO OBSERVE:

1. Each time a question was asked out of sincerity.
2. Each time a question was asked out of need.
3. Each time the question was answered from God's will.
4. Each time the one or ones asking the question submitted to baptism for the remission of their sins.

Can we afford to do any less than respond to Heaven's call in answer to man's greatest need? Let's examine what the Bible teaches about this matter.

MAN IS INDICTED BECAUSE OF SIN.

1. **Romans 3:9** – . . . They are all under sin.
2. **Romans 3:10** – . . . There is none righteous, no not one.
3. **Romans 3:23** – For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
4. **Romans 5:12** – Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.
5. **Ezekiel 18:20** – The soul that sins, it shall die . . .
6. **John 8:34** – Jesus answered them, Most assuredly I say to you whoever commits sin is a slave of sin.

HEAR the Gospel

- **ROMANS 10:17** – Then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.
- **JOHN 8:32** – You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

BELIEVE the Gospel

- **HEBREWS 11:6** – But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.
- **Mark:16:16** – “He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
- **ACTS 8:37** – Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

REPENT of Sins

- **LUKE 13:3, 5** – I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish
- **ACTS 2:38** –Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- **ACTS 17:30-31** - Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,
because He has appointed a day on which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man whom He has ordained. He has given assurance of this to all by raising Him from the dead.”
- **2 PETER 3:9** –The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.

CONFESS Christ as the Son of God

- **MATTHEW 10:32-33** –Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.
But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.
- **ROMANS 10:10** - With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
- **ACTS 8:37** –Then Philip said, “If you believe with all your heart, you may.” And he answered and said, “I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.”

BAPTIZED (Immersed) for the remission of sins

- **ACTS 2:38** –Then Peter said to them, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- **1 PETER 3:21** - There is also an antitype which now saves us -- baptism(not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

- **ACTS 22:16** - . . . Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.
- **MARK 16:16** - He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
- **GALATIANS 3:27** - as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
- **ROMANS 6:3-5** - Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?
Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.
- **COLOSSIANS 2:12** – 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.

The **BLOOD OF CHRIST**

- **EPHESIANS 1:7** – In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace
- **EPHESIANS 2:13** -But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
- **COLOSSIANS 1:14** - In whom [CHRIST] we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins.
- **HEBREWS 9:22** - . . . Without shedding of blood there is no remission.
- **1 JOHN 1:7** - . . . The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin.
- **REVELATION 1:5** - . . . To Him [CHRIST]who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood.
- **REVELATION 5:9** - For You were slain, And have redeemed us to God by Your blood Out of every tribe and tongue and people and nation.

FIVE REQUIREMENTS FOR CHRISTIAN BAPTISM

1. MUST BE AN IMMERSION IN WATER.

- **ROMANS 6:4** – Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.
- **COLOSSIANS 2:12** – 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.

2. MUST BE TO A REPENTANT BELIEVER.

- **ACTS 2:38** – Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- **MARK 16:16** – He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.
- **ACTS 8:36-38** – Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

3. MUST BE UPON A CONFESSION OF FAITH IN CHRIST.

ACTS 8:37 - Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

- **ROMANS 10:10** - With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.
- **MATTHEW 10:32-33** – Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.

But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.

4. MUST BE FOR (OR UNTO) THE REMISSION OF SINS.

- **ACTS 2:38** - Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
- **ACTS 22:16** – . . . Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

5. MUST BE IN THE NAME OF THE FATHER, THE SON, AND THE HOLY SPIRIT.

- **MATTHEW 28:19** – Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

ILLUSTRATION OF THE IMPORTANCE OF OBEYING EACH PART OF GOD'S PLAN FOR MAN'S SALVATION

If a combination lock has five numbers in its combination, each number must be turned to in its proper sequence before the lock can be opened. Suppose a lock has the combination of

8 to the right
12 to the left
10 to the right
4 to the left

Is it not true that:

- Omitting a number will NOT open the lock.
- Turning 19 to the right instead of the left will NOT open
- Turning 4 to the right will NOT open the lock.
- Adding a number to the sequence will NOT open the lock.
- Leaving out a number in the sequence will NOT open the lock.



The required number in the required sequence set by the one who had the authority to establish such, must be honored, followed, and obeyed. Before the combination lock will open.

The same is true with obeying God:

- Omitting a part in God's Plan For Man's Salvation will NOT provide salvation.
- Changing what God has commanded will NOT provide salvation.
- Adding something additional to what God has commanded will NOT provide salvation.
- Leaving out something that God has commanded will NOT provide salvation.

Kind reader of this page, please do God's will in God's way and you will receive the promised benefit from God!

A New Testament Application

In Acts 19:1-7, we find a New Testament principle of application of the illustration of the combination lock. **ACTS 19:1-7**

And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism."

Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

Now the men were about twelve in all.

In this passage Ephesus who had been baptized. They had received John's baptism (v. 3) Notice how much they had fulfilled.

- Immersion in water? YES
- Repentant believers? YES, but on wrong faith now.
- Upon a confession of faith in Christ? NO
- For the remission of sins? NO (Mark 1:4) John preached a baptism unto repentance
- Into the name of the Father, son, and Holy Spirit? NO

Since they had not fulfilled all the REQUIREMENTS EVEN THOUGH THEY HAD BEEN IMMERSUED IN WATER. They had to be "re-baptized," this time in the name of Jesus (v. 5). The second time was the ONE baptism of Ephesians 4:5

WHICH DO YOU CHOOSE . . . WHAT GOD TEACHES . . . OR WHAT MAN SAYS?

GOD **Belief + Baptism** = Salvation **Mark 16:16**

MAN **Belief – Baptism** = Salvation ???

GOD **Repentance + Baptism** = Salvation **Acts 2:38**

MAN **Repentance – Baptism** = Salvation ???

GOD **We are Baptized into Christ** **Romans 6:3; Galatians 3:27**

MAN **We are NOT Baptized into Christ** ???

GOD **Baptism washes away our Sins** **Acts 22:16**

MAN **Baptism does NOT wash away our sins** ???

GOD **Baptism Doe also NOW save us** **1 Peter 3:21**

MAN **Baptism Does also NOT save us** ???

Listening Friend, life is short and eternity is too long to be wrong . . . to not be obedient to the simple commands of Christ to obey the Gospel. The Scriptures are clear we have read together are clear.

- Will you not believe in God and Christ . . . today?

- Will you not repent of your every sin . . . today?
- Will you not confess Christ as God's only Begotten Son . . . today?
- Will you not be baptized (immersed in water) for the remission of sins . . . today?

WHAT IS WRONG WITH DENOMINATIONAL BAPTISM

Competing with the one baptism taught in the New Testament are the several denominational baptisms taught b man.

1. DENOMINATION BAPTISM IS WRONG BECAUSE IT HAS THE WRONG AUTHORITY.

- a. Denominational baptism has the authority of that particular denomination rather than the Bible.
- b. Jesus never authorized denominational baptism because He never authorized denominations!

THE BIBLE TEACHES that Jesus authorized the kind of baptism He wanted and did so by His authority. Matthew 28:19-20

2. DENOMINATIONAL BAPTISM IS WRONG BECAUSE IT HAS THE WRONG SUBJECTS.

- a. Infants are not scriptural candidates for baptism.
- b. People who believe they are already saved and believe themselves to be Christians already are not candidates for baptism.

THE BIBLE TEACHES that scriptural candidates must be able to repent of their sins and confess Christ prior to baptism.

Where in the Bible do you read of someone who is already a Christian being baptized, or an infant or very young child being baptized?

3. DENOMINATIONAL BAPTISM IS WRONG BECAUSE IT HAS THE WRONG CONFESSION.

- a. The denominational confession, "God for Christ's sake pardoned my sins," prior to baptism is unscriptural.
- b. Believing one's sins have been forgiven before the blood of Christ is reached (in Biblical baptism) is wrong.

THE BIBLE TEACHES that the proper confession to precede baptism is, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:35-38)

Baptism is to save, but it does not save apart from the blood of Christ

4. DENOMINATIONAL BAPTISM IS WRONG BECAUSE IT HAS THE WRONG PURPOSE.

- a. When one disavows any connection between baptism and salvation,

then what he submits to is NOT Bible baptism.
THE BIBLE TEACHES that scriptural baptism is essential to salvation.

5. DENOMINATIONAL BAPTISM IS WRONG BECAUSE IT PUTS ONE INTO THE WRONG CHURCH.

- a. How could one be scripturally baptized and wind up in some denomination?
- b. It takes the baptism of that denomination to put one into that denomination.

THE BIBLE TEACHES that the right baptism puts one into the Lord's church. There is not a wrong way to be baptized right.

6. DENOMINATIONAL BAPTISM IS WRONG BECAUSE IT CAUSES ONE TO WEAR THE WRONG NAME.

- a. One baptized into a denominational church by a denominational baptism invariably causes one to wear the name of that denomination.

THE BIBLE TEACHES that baptism for the remission of sins is a part of what one must do in order to be saved

Listening friend, I again remind each one of us that **life is too short and eternity is too long for you to be wrong about your baptism.** May God richly bless you to reach the most important decision you will ever reach . . . the decision to become a Christian! Upon rendering your obedience to the Gospel, Christ will add you to His church (Acts 2:47.) Dedicate yourself to live faithful to God's will. Choose a faithful congregation from among the churches of Christ and attend faithfully all the periods of worship and Bible Study offered there.

SINNERS HEAR!

Hear what? You must hear the gospel! Tell men what God did before you tell them what to do. Jesus gave the Great Commission. Christians are to preach the gospel that sinners may gear. God is Christ died for us at the cross.

The foundational parable Jesus teaches is that of "the soils" (Matthew 13; Luke 8). There have been and only will be four soils (hearts). The fault is not in the Sower! The fault is not in the Seed! The result is determined by the hearer. "Take heed how you hear!" God calls sinners through their ears. Eyes open must see. But to listen means one must stop, focus, submit, think, then obey to hear. To a Hebrew, to listen is to obey. Sinners, to be saved, must hear the gospel.

SINNERS BELIEVE!

One false teacher said, "It doesn't matter *what* you believe – it matters *that* you believe." That is senseless! The gospel, alone, is God's power to save (Romans 1:16). To be saved, sinners must believe the gospel. Only Christ can save. He is the object of our faith.

SINNERS REPENT!

The word "repent is now outlawed – even at church. What else can sinners do?

- "I'm okay" is the inside lie.
- "You're okay" is the outside lie.
- "Everyone is okay" is the eternal lie.

To repent is to grasp "God is right, and I am wrong." Repentance means a new mind, heart, and life. Sinners, to be saved, one must repent."

SINNERS CONFESS!

We believe in our hearts and then confess with our mouth (Romans 10:9-16). We do not create our own private religion – we confess Jesus is Lord, God is glorified, not man.

SINNERS BE BAPTIZED!

This is not a meritorious work. I believe, I repent, I confess, but a disciple baptizes me! A gift must be received. In baptism sinners receive God's gift – Jesus (Romans 6:3-40). **Baptism confesses man's lost-ness in order to claim God's salvation.** Sinners, to be saved, must be baptized.

Sincere and devout people, members of denominational groups, do not think they need to be baptized because their "pastors" have taught them: (1) Salvation is by faith only. (2) The thief on the cross. And, (3) What would happen if a person, in a car on his way to be baptized, was in a fatal car wreck? Let's examine each of these.

FAITH ALONE?

Salvation is by faith (John 3:16; Acts 10:43; 13:39; 16:31), "not by faith only" (James 2:24). "The demons believe and tremble" (James 2:19). "Many among the rulers believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they be put out of the synagogue." (John 12:42).

Salvation is by repentance (Acts 11:18), **but not by repentance alone** because "If you do not believe in Jesus, you shall die in your sins" (John 8:24).

Salvation is by baptism (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16), **but not by baptism alone** because baptism does not wash away your sins unless it is preceded by faith (John 8:24; Acts 2:36; 16:31), repentance (2:38), and a confession (Romans 10:9-10).

THE THIEF ON THE CROSS!

Jesus had “authority on the earth to forgive sins” (Mark 2:10) without baptism, as in the case of:

- A paralytic lying on a stretcher. (Mark 2:5)
- A sinful woman. (Luke 7:37-48)
- A penitent tax collector. (Luke 19:1-9)
- And, the thief on the cross. (23:32-43)

He could do so today if He wanted to, but He who knows best, just before He left the earth, gave His law for salvation to last “to the end of the world” (Matthew 28:20). “HE who believes and is immersed shall be saved” (Mark 16:16) That law for salvation began to be practiced on the first Pentecost Sunday after Christ’s resurrection and is to continue “to the end of the world.”

A FATAL CAR WRECK!

The person who dies in a fatal car wreck on his way to be baptized is in God’s hands. The argument presented by this scenario comes from a man who thinks he has found a defect in the plan of salvation. That man blatantly disregards God’s Word then He uses this argument to talk people out of being baptized.”

Will the Lord esteem this man? I believe the Lord has given His answer in **Isaiah 66:2** – “**This is the one I esteem: he who is humble and contrite in spirit, and trembles at my word.**” The Lord will not esteem the man who does not show humility and respect for the Lord’s plan and urgency of salvation. He will esteem the man who works night and day to bring as many lost people as possible to the “washing which now saves you” (1 Peter 3:21).

