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THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison

DOES BAPTISM SAVE?

Much confusion exists as to the place and purpose of baptism in God's plan to save man from sin. Many believe that baptism is unnecessary for salvation and that one is saved at the point of faith before and without being baptized. A careful study of the New Testament reveals that not only is baptism necessary to salvation, one cannot be saved without being properly baptized.

Many seem unaware that the Bible clearly states that baptism saves. 1 Peter 3:20-21 reads, "Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. The like figure whereunto even **baptism doth also now save us** (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:" Read these verses again and then answer this question: Does the Bible teach that baptism saves?. The question is not if baptism saves but how does it save?

Hearing the gospel is essential to creating faith in Jesus Christ (Romans 10:17). Faith in Jesus as the Son of God is necessary to salvation. Jesus said that one who does not believe in Him will die in their sins (John 8:24; Cf. Mark 16:16). Also required for salvation is genuine repentance. Again, Jesus said that unless one repents he will perish (Luke 13:3, 5; Cf. Acts 17:30-31). Jesus also stated that if one will confess Him before men He will confess that person before the Father but if one denies Him before men, He will deny that person before the Father (Matthew 10:32-33; Cf. Romans 10:9-10). Who would deny that each of these are necessary steps to salvation? Yet, none of these place one in contact with the blood of Jesus which is necessary to washing away sin (Revelation 1:5). This is the purpose of baptism. It is in baptism that one reaches the blood of Jesus. Jesus shed His blood in His death (John 19:34). Baptism puts one in contact with the death of Jesus and thus it is in baptism that one reaches the blood of Jesus and his sins are washed away. "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 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." (Romans 6:3-4). Note that "newness of life" comes after, not before baptism. Ananias told Saul, "And now why are you waiting? Arise and **be baptized, and wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord." (Acts 22:16). This passage makes sense only if one understands the connection between baptism and the blood of Jesus. Yes, friends, "baptism doth also now save us."