

SUNDAY MORNING

Announcements

Clay Morris

Song Leader

Jack Calvert

Lord's Supper

Mark Davis Jerry Schnelle
Pete Rowland

Prayers

Daniel Allgor Jon Barry

SUNDAY EVENING

Announcements

Scripture Reading

Song Leader

Lord's Supper

Prayers

WEDNESDAY EVENING

Announcements

Song Leader

Prayers

*Sick, recovering, discouraged, home-bound?
Anxious about our kids returning to school?
Older and wearing out? There are a lot of
things to occupy our minds and distract us
from Christ. We can help ourselves with
prayer and study in the Bible. And we can
be mindful of others who face these
challenges. Let us be diligent to help
ourselves and others to be strong Christians.*

ABOUT US

Elders

Jack Calvert Rodney Ellis

Jon Barry Bill Brittenham
Mike Davis Clay Morris

Evangelist

Bryan Garlock

SERVICE TIMES

Sunday

Bible Study9:30 A.M.
Worship10:15 A.M.
Worship6:00 P.M.

Wednesday

Bible Study7:00 P.M.

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GOD'S PLAN FOR SALVATION

- Hear** the word of truth Romans 10:13-17
- Believe** the truth..... Hebrews 11:6; John 8:24
- Repent** from all sins Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38
- Confess** the name of Christ ... Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10
- Be Baptized** in His name Mark 16:16; 1 Peter 3:21; Colossians 2:12
- Walk** in newness of life and **be faithful** unto death Romans 6:1-4; Revelation 2:10



Volume XXV

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Issue 35

A Response to a Gentleman about Salvation
 Bryan Garlock

The gentlemen wrote me, "I believe that water baptism is certainty apart [sic] of the conversion process of coming into christianity. That's an undeniable fact. However, another undeniable fact is that people are saved by faith alone in christ apart from their works (we'll probably disagree on that issue but can maybe talk about that in the future). When it comes to water baptism the apostles hold it very highly and I'm tempted to take the lutheran view of water baptism. Anyway, I guess my issue is trying to believe that water baptism is not a work that we do in addition to God doing a work on us."

Thanks for giving me the opportunity to help you see my point of view on faith, works, grace, and baptism. I will try to be concise in my response but if I need to clarify anything, please let me know.

"I believe that water baptism is certainty apart [sic] of the conversion process of coming into christianity. That's an undeniable fact."

If you believe this, then surely you see that baptism is necessary and essential. Jesus says baptism is necessary to enter the kingdom (John 3.3, 5). Peter says it is where our sins are washed away and where we are added to the body of Christ (Acts 2.38, 41, 47). Since you agree this is an undeniable fact, this should settle the question in your mind. Anything beyond this would be the tradition of men and false systems like Calvinism creeping in to keep us from the truth.

"However, another undeniable fact is that people are saved by faith alone in christ apart from their works (we'll probably disagree on that issue but can maybe talk about that in the future)."

It is not an undeniable fact that "people are saved by faith alone in christ

FAMILY TALK

Continue to remember and check on our shut-ins: **Bonnie Allgor, Maxine Burnham, Ann Thomas and Francine Davis.** Cards, calls and visits are ALWAYS needed and appreciated.

Please remember **Maxine Burnham** and **Jean Cronce** in your prayers.

Tara Stinson's her father, **Dennis Sandlin**, passed away Aug. 15th. Please pray for **Tara** and her family.

Nancy Rowe had successful surgery in Shreveport on Wednesday.

Here is the current schedule of services:

Bible Study: 9:30 AM
Services: 10:15 AM
Kids Only: 5:00 PM
Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Sunday and **Wednesday** Bible Studies are concluding the **Gospel of John** and will begin **Galatians** next.

Additionally, we are having studies on the life of Paul:

Monday: 7:00 PM
Friday: 7:00 PM

Ladies Bible Class:

Next class will be September 8th.

Is your faith STRONGER or WEAKER than before Covid-19? Why? Are you praying and studying more or less? We are spending less time together face-to-face, but our faith should not be based on our brethren. 2 Pet. 3:8 "grow in the grace and knowledge"

apart from their works". Nowhere in Scripture will you find that we are "saved by faith alone". We are saved by faith, but not faith alone. *There is a difference.*

For example, consider John 3.16. First, it does not say "believe only", just that we are to believe. However, the believer of John 3.16 is not a faith-alone individual. Let's look at it this way: Does the believer of John 3.16 repent of sins? We would both agree that he does. Therefore, John 3.16 is not faith alone. Does the believer of John 3.16 confess Jesus? Yes. Does the believer of John 3.16 worship in spirit and in truth? Yes. Does the believer of John 3.16 love his neighbor? Yes. Then the belief of John 3.16 is not some mere mental faith that excludes obedience. In addition, the believer of John 3.16 will obey Jesus to "[r]epent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins..." (Acts 2.38)

Now, passages like Eph. 2.8-10 and Titus 3.4-6 simply teach that God intervened and saved man, not based on works that man did (we have never deserved grace, for example). Interestingly, in a passage that teaches that God saved us apart from works where we might boast, baptism is nestled right in there. See Eph. 2.4-6 — this is baptism. Rom. 6.3-4 and Col. 2.11-13 help us to see that this is in fact baptism. Thus, contextually speaking, Paul is not talking about baptism when he talks about faith and works-by-which-we-may-boast in Ephesians.

A quick note about faith. Many people see faith and assume mental faith apart from obedience (Ex. Eph. 2.8; Rom. 5.1;

John 3.16, etc.) Yet, scriptural faith is active and obedient; it is not merely mental and void of obeying commands. Notice the illustration about John 3.16 above; but more so, notice Hebrews 11 and James 2.14-26. In Heb. 11, the writer constantly says things like, "By faith, Abraham..." or "By faith, Noah..." Notice that their faith was active. Thus, when we say Abraham was justified by faith (Romans 4), we know that it was not mere mental faith, but a faith that "worked"; it was *a faith that acted when God commanded*. In fact, it is what lead James to say that we are not justified by "faith alone" (for no Scripture ever says that we are justified by faith alone) but by works (James 2.24).

"When it comes to water baptism the apostles hold it very highly and I'm tempted to take the lutheran view of water baptism."

They hold it highly because Jesus commanded it, because it saves (1 Peter 3.21), it washes away sin (Acts 22.16), it forgives (Acts 2.38), it puts one into Christ (Gal. 3.26-27), and it is the point at which we die to sin and walk in newness of life (Rom. 6.3-4). Those who hold to a faith-only theology diminish the importance of baptism.

"Anyway, I guess my issue is trying to believe that water baptism is not a work that we do in addition to God doing a work on us."

Baptism was commanded by Jesus and thus baptism is not a work of man. The fact is, baptism is a work of God. Read Col. 2.11-13. Baptism is the operating table where God cuts away the sin, just as

circumcision is an operation that cuts away the flesh — that is the point Paul is making.

Finally, read Gal. 3.26-29. Notice that in the context of condemning works (like in Ephesians) Paul says that it is faith that is necessary. But what is attached to faith? Baptism. He literally says it is how one gets into Christ! Therefore, the teaching in Galatians is not condemning baptism or claiming that baptism is a work "that we do in addition to God doing a work on us". It is at the point of baptism that God does his work on us. Remember, Col. 3.11-13? See also 1 Peter 3.21 — Peter says baptism is where we get a good conscience because we are cleansed at the point of baptism. See also Eph. 5.26-27. Notice when we are sanctified, cleansed, presented holy, and without blemish. It was "by the washing of water with the word".

The problem you have, my friend, is that you know God does work on us in the conversion process, but you are confused about when God does the working. It is not at mere mental faith in Jesus; it is when that faith is manifested or culminated in water baptism in the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.

I appreciate your love for God's word and your search for truth. Bryan

Which of your brothers or sisters have you encouraged this week? Have you sent a card? Have you called? Have you texted? Even though we limit our personal contact, we can still encourage and edify one another.