

A MOST IMPORTANT DATE

Hunter Peay

Yesterday was 8 years since I put on Christ in baptism and became a Christian. I've been walking with and trying to follow Jesus for 8 years. To me, that is a very significant date and something I think is really worth celebrating. It is something to really honor and cherish. To become a Christian is the single most impactful and important decision that we can possibly make, and to put on Christ in baptism is our marriage to Christ and to become One in His body. Very significant, no?

Something that has always perplexed me is how it seems of little significance that date is to Christians. We take time to celebrate a birthday. We take time to celebrate the anniversary of a marriage between two people. Yet, it seems we have no common way to celebrate the anniversary of the very significant date that a soul was saved and added to the Lord's church.

To me, that anniversary is far more significant than anything else. Eventually you will die. Your time on this earth will expire. Your body will wear out and fall apart. No more birthdays after that. And marriages are a temporary thing for this lifetime. Earthly marriages can be dissolved here in this life, or will be in the life to come. There will not be marriage in the life to come like there is here on this earth, only the marriage of the church to Christ. Our decision to follow Christ and be baptized into Christ is both our rebirth and our marriage to Christ. That is something that is everlasting and eternally important.

Let me be clear. I do not think it is wrong to celebrate wedding anniversaries or birthdays. I think that it is a good thing to celebrate those things. However, my brothers and sisters in Christ, how much more should we celebrate our anniversary to Christ? How much more should we celebrate our rebirth? We put in plenty of time and effort to acknowledge so many things that are far less significant. Why should we not put in more time and effort as brothers and sisters in Christ, as a community in Christ, to celebrate that someone made the decision 1, 5, 15 or 50 years ago to follow Christ? To celebrate that a soul was saved? To celebrate that someone has continued the very difficult journey to walk with Christ? More importantly, do we make that date internally significant for ourselves? Do we make that date the big deal that it is? Do we take time to meditate on what happened on that day? Do we celebrate our anniversary with Jesus, to celebrate

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“HAVING AUTHORITY”

Sewell Hall

Generally speaking, our generation has an aversion to authority, yet those who heard the Lord's great sermon observed that *“He taught them as one having authority”* (Matthew 7:29). We prefer sermons that deal in generalities; Jesus dealt with specifics. We prefer preachers who praise rather than condemn; Jesus condemned not only wrong conduct but wrong motives, as well. We object to “name calling;” Jesus unabashedly named unfavorably the leading religious party of His day. We favor motivation by promise of rewards, but Jesus, while offering rewards, did not hesitate to threaten *“hell fire”* (Matthew 5:22; 18:9). Our society seeks instant gratification while the promises of Jesus are primarily for life hereafter. We tend to think of everything as relative, but Jesus spoke in absolutes. We criticize as simplistic any preaching that “makes everything black and white,” yet Jesus repeatedly divided His subjects into just two categories: right and wrong (cf. Matthew 13:48; 22:10). We applaud broad-mindedness and seek the easy way, but Jesus warned that His way is narrow and the gate is difficult (Matthew 7:13-14).

Jesus knew that in every generation those who would follow the heavenly way would be few compared to the many who would reject it. His concern was not with quantity, but with quality. Consequently, He compromised His standards not one iota to accommodate the weaknesses of men or the peculiarities of His generation. Had He made any compromise at all the resulting kingdom would not have been the kingdom of Heaven.

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our rebirth?

Consider the words of Jesus: *“Or what woman, having ten silver coins, if she loses one coin, does not light a lamp and sweep the house and seek diligently until she finds it? And when she has found it, she calls together her friends and neighbors, saying, ‘Rejoice with me, for I have found the coin that I had lost.’ Just so, I tell you, there is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents”* (Luke 15:8-10).

The angels have joy; do we? Do we continue to rejoice for years to come? Do we celebrate and cherish our wedding anniversary with Christ? Do we celebrate our spiritual birthday? What is most important to us?

**"WHAT MUST I DO
TO BE SAVED?"**

ACTS 16:30

LEARN THE GOSPEL

John 6:45; Romans 10:17

BELIEVE IN CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16

CONFESS CHRIST

Matthew 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 3:19; 17:30

BE BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"THE ASSEMBLING OF
OURSELVES TOGETHER"**

HEBREWS 10:24-25

SUNDAY

Worship @ 10:00 a.m.

Studies @ 11:45 a.m.

WEDNESDAY

Studies & Worship @ 7:00 p.m.

75 Sherrod Boulevard
Belén, New Mexico

Seekers Welcome.
Members Expected.

**"IF A MAN IS OVERTAKEN IN
ANY TRESPASS...
RESTORE SUCH A ONE"**

GALATIANS 6:1

CONFESS TRESPASSES

James 5:16; 1st John 1:9

REPENT OF SIN

Acts 8:22

PRAY FOR FORGIVENESS

Acts 8:22

REMAIN STEADFAST

1st Corinthians 15:58; Revelation 2:10

**"A WORD FITLY SPOKEN IS
LIKE APPLES OF GOLD IN
SETTINGS OF SILVER"**

PROVERBS 25:11

"Everything you say should be true, but not everything true should be said."

– Voltaire

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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NO

Chadwick Brewer

"He said to me, 'My grace is sufficient for you, for My strength is made perfect in weakness'" (2nd Corinthians 12:9).

We know that God answers prayers in three ways. He either tells us yes, no, or wait a while. We like the answer "yes" because we get what we want. We even like the answer "wait a while" because we still get what we want even though the waiting may make us impatient. It's the answer "no" that we often do not like. Paul in this passage prayed three times that his affliction be taken away and three times the answer was "no."

The wonderful thing about the answer "no" is that it is the right answer. God knows what we need, and sometime what we need is to hear "no." Have there been times in your life when you knew to the depths of your heart what you wanted or needed and were very unhappy when God did not grant it? Sometimes it takes year or decades before for you can look back and say, "I am so glad that God said no. He knew what was best and had something much better waiting for me."

God told Paul that His strength was made perfect in weakness. We, like Paul, sometimes can only see that or realize that when we are told "no." Today, let us be thankful for all the times we were not given what we wanted.

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