

BAPTISM, GRACE, & WORKS

Andy Belknap, adapted

There are many people today who believe that baptism is not essential to being saved. I truly believe this is one of Satan's grandest lies that he has successfully spread throughout the ages. What greater way is there to snatch souls away from God than to sow deceit and confusion around such an important topic? It would be foolish for him not to.

So, why is it that many believe that baptism is not essential to our salvation? I believe most would argue this conviction by referencing Ephesians 2:8-10, which says: *"For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not 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, that we should walk in them."*

From these verses, they claim: "Baptism must not be essential for salvation because baptism is a work, and we are not saved by works. We are saved by grace." I full-heartedly agree with the second-half of that statement. We are most definitely saved by grace, and not by works. The first half of that statement, however, is inaccurate. The term *"works"* that is used in Ephesians 2:8-10 is not talking about baptism. From the context, we see that the term *"works"* here is referring to good deeds. I wholeheartedly agree that we are not going to be saved by doing so many good deeds that we earn or achieve a saved status, which could allow us to boast. Baptism, however, is not a work that allows us to **earn** our salvation. It is an action that we do that is a response to the grace which God offers to those who obey Him.

Let's think about it this way:

- When Israel crossed the Red Sea to escape from the Egyptians (Exodus 14), were they saved by the **work** of crossing the Red Sea, or were they saved because of God's grace on them?
- When the Israelite army marched around Jericho seven times as God instructed (Joshua 6), did Jericho fall because of the **works** of the army, or because of God's grace?
- When Naaman was tasked with washing in the Jordan River seven times (2nd Kings 5), was he cleansed of his disease

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because of his **work** of washing in the Jordan, or because of God's grace on him?

I believe in all three of these Biblical events, these individuals were saved/delivered/healed as a result of God's grace. However, would the Israelite nation have survived had they not chosen to cross the Red Sea? Would Jericho have fallen had the Israelite army not marched around as God instructed? Would Naaman have been healed without dipping in the Jordan seven times?

The resounding answer to all of these questions is "No!" Yet, when each performed their respective actions, none of them could boast that they **earned** this grace from God because of any great work that they did. They simply did what God, or His messengers, instructed them to do, and they received the gift of God's grace because of it.

Perhaps it is by God's design that the act of being baptized is not something that you can even do by yourself. Someone else has to be the one to immerse you. It is no great feat or action that gives you any right to boast about. You are simply being dunked under water by someone else. It is God and His Son who is truly doing, and has done, all of the work.

Don't just hastily believe whatever church that you worship with is teaching. Don't just believe whatever your preacher or pastor says. Don't even believe what I say.

God is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him. Dig deep into the Scriptures for yourself. Read in Acts about the accounts of those being saved and see how baptism was viewed as being extremely important, even needing to be done in the middle of a chariot ride (Acts 8:26-39), and in the middle of the night (Acts 16:25-34)! Read passages such as Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Acts 22:16, Galatians 3:27, and 1st Peter 3:21 which make it clear that baptism is essential for salvation, and it is only after we are baptized that our sins are forgiven.

God is not the author of confusion. The Truth is in the Word.

"In the period that paleontologists call 'the Cambrian explosion,' virtually every major animal group appears suddenly from nowhere, with no transitional forms preceding them. So, instead of animals diverging from a common parent, what the fossil record shows is that all the major groups arose abruptly at one time. Think about that. Does the evidence support the theory that life evolved gradually by accident or does it point to a Creator?"

– Mark Cahill

**"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

"Love difficult people. You are
one of them."

– Bob Goff

"WHOLE COUNSEL"

ACTS 20:27

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"HIS HOUR"

Bryan Matthew Dockens

From a cliff, they meant to throw Him,
But it was not yet His hour.
He passed through the midst of them.
Life and death are in His power.

Enemies would have stoned Him,
But it was not yet His hour.
He walked through the mob again.
Life and death are in His power.

His hands and feet they would pierce;
Messiah must be crucified.
Prophecy said they would be fierce.
Jesus knew how He must die.

"I lay down My life," He said.
"No one can take it from Me."
"I'll rise again from the dead."
"Therefore, My Father loves Me."

In His hands, He holds the keys –
They're His by right of conquest –
To open death and Hades.
He is Christ, Son of the Blessed.

RIO GRANDE VALLEY CHURCH OF CHRIST

505-864-0282

rgvcoc@gmail.com

Box 989, Belén, NM 87002

www.RGVChurchOfChrist.org

75 Sherrod Boulevard

Facebook.com/RGVChurchOfChrist