

A Study of How Baptism Fits into God's Plan of Salvation

All men are guilty of sin and in need of God's grace and mercy in order to be in an approved relationship with God. God has given mankind the opportunity to be redeemed through the blood of Christ Jesus. God is the one who justifies us through Jesus.

Romans 3:21-26. 21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, 22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, 25 whom God set forth as a propitiation by His blood, through faith, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His forbearance God had passed over the sins that were previously committed, 26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Even so, becoming a child of God is a process. The reason I say it is a "process" is that God has defined more than one thing that He expects from us in order to take part in the salvation He freely offers. For example, we have to make a choice to have "faith" and "believe" in Jesus. That is something we are required to do. God does not force this on us. The point of this study is to illustrate that simple faith is not all God requires of us in order to accept this free gift He offers. Before we go any further, I want to emphasize that salvation is a gift that God give us. There is no way we can "work" for salvation and there is no way we can "earn" salvation. We are guilty of sin and the only way we can be saved is according to the mercy extended to us from a loving God. It is according to the grace and mercy of God, but man plays a part in his salvation. It isn't that man literally saves himself, but he does have a part in his salvation because he must be complicit with God's instructions in order to be saved. A passages providing an example of man having a part in his salvation is **Acts 2:40**. Both the NKJ and NIV versions are provided. Other passages such as **1 Timothy 4:16** and **1 Corinthians 9:22** illustrate that the preacher has a part in saving those he teaches.

- **Acts 2:40.** 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation."
- **Acts 2:40 (NIV).** 40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, "Save yourselves from this corrupt generation."
- **1 Timothy 4:16.** 16 Take heed to yourself and to the doctrine. Continue in them, for in doing this you will save both yourself and those who hear you.
- **1 Corinthians 9:22.** 22 to the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Like "faith" and "belief", as stated in Romans 3:22 (above), we should ask ourselves if there any other instructions God has given us that are linked to His salvation. If there are, then we need to consider all of what God has said regarding His instructions leading to salvation, since we must abide by all His word, as identified in **Mathew 4:3-4**. This

passage is when Jesus had been fasting in the wilderness for 40 day and He was being tempted by Satan.

- **Matthew 4:3-4.** 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

The objective of this paper is to illustrate that God associates more than simple faith with salvation, and therefore, requires more than simple faith for Him to bestow the gift of salvation upon us. Along with faith, God also associates repentance, confession, "calling on the name of the Lord", and baptism with salvation and/or the forgiveness of sins, which is effectively the same thing. The point I am trying to communicate is that all of these are all equally important to salvation since God identifies them with salvation. The next few sections provide passages along with discussion to substantiate this position.

Faith / Belief

Faith is the most obvious of God's instructions that is required in order to be saved. It is the first step after someone hears the gospel. If someone does not believe, they will have no desire to follow any of God's instructions. It is the primary ingredient that makes everything come together. In a "nut shell", the process of obtaining faith goes like this. Someone must hear the gospel message, realize they are lost because of their sin that separates them from God, and believe that the blood of Jesus is the solution that brings them into a covenant relationship with God. There are several passages that indicated that "belief / faith" are associated with being saved. We will only look at a couple since most all would agree with this point.

Romans 10:8-11. 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of **faith** which we preach): 9 that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever **believes** on Him will not be put to shame."

Hebrews 10:38-39. 38 Now the just shall live by faith; But if anyone draws back, My soul has no pleasure in him." 39 But we are not of those who draw back to perdition, but of those who **believe** to the saving of the soul.

Belief / faith is more than a mental understanding. The type of belief God expects from us is one that motivates us to action. Without going into too much detail, consider the following passages that illustrate God's expectation that we act on our faith.

James 2:14-22. 14 What does it profit, my brethren, if someone says he has faith but does not have works? Can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is naked and

destitute of daily food, 16 and one of you says to them, "Depart in peace, be warmed and filled," but you do not give them the things which are needed for the body, what does it profit? 17 Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. 18 But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works. 19 You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe; and tremble! 20 But do you want to know, O foolish man, that faith without works is dead? 21 Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? 22 Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect?

John 14:15. 15 "If you love Me, keep My commandments.

This simply helps us understand that “faith” or “belief” in God is more than simply saying “I believe”. These passages define our “faith” as a life changing force that prompts us to serve. The “works” identified in James 2 is not about “perfect works”, but works that demonstrate ones faith.

Repentance

Repentance is a change of mind that leads to a change in our lives. When we repent, we change our mind about the way we have conducted ourselves when we lived in sin and we strive not to act that way any longer. When we change our minds about sin, we resist it instead of giving in to it. I’m not saying we will be “perfect” in the sense that we will never sin, but that we are striving to be righteous and relying on the strength of Christ to help us overcome. There are several passages that emphasize the necessity for us to repent if we are going to serve God. The following passages emphasize the necessity of repentance with respect to “not perishing” and “forgiveness”.

Luke 13:1-5. 1 There were present at that season some who told Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. 2 And Jesus answered and said to them, "Do you suppose that these Galileans were worse sinners than all other Galileans, because they suffered such things? 3 "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish. 4 "Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse sinners than all other men who dwelt in Jerusalem? 5 "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish."

Simply stated, Luke 13:1-5 identifies that those who don’t repent will perish.

Acts 2:36-38. 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 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 2:38 associates repentance with baptism as being “*for the remission of sins*”. The people already believed when they asked “*what shall we do*”. Now Peter gives them further instruction on what they need to do in order to receive the forgiveness of their sins.

Acts 3:17-21. 17 "Yet now, brethren, I know that you did it in ignorance, as did also your rulers. 18 "But those things which God foretold by the mouth of all His prophets, that the Christ would suffer, He has thus fulfilled. 19 "**Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out**, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, 20 "and that He may send Jesus Christ, who was preached to you before, 21 "whom heaven must receive until the times of restoration of all things, which God has spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets since the world began.

Acts 3:19 associates repentance with conversion so our sins may be blotted out.

Summary: Those taught the gospel are told to repent in order that their sins may be forgiven (or blotted out). This is required in order to be saved.

Confession

Confessing Jesus as our Savior is more than simply saying the words. It reflects what is truly in the heart so that we are not ashamed to tell others that Jesus is our Lord. In Matthew 10:32-33, Jesus said:

Matthew 10:32-33. 32 "Therefore whoever **confesses** Me before men, him I will also **confess** before My Father who is in heaven. 33 "**But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.**

Jesus will treat us the same way we treat Him. If we fail to “confess” Jesus before men, He will deny us before the Father. Jesus is man’s advocate, going to the Father on our behalf regarding our sin (**1 John 2:1**). If man does not confess Jesus, Jesus will not serve as man’s advocate regarding our sin. Believing in Jesus is not enough. In Jesus’ day, there were those who believed, but would not confess Jesus because they feared man and loved the praise of man more than the praise of God (**John 12:42-43**).

- **1 John 2:1.** 1 My little children, these things I write to you, so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous.
- **John 12:42-43.** 42 Nevertheless even among the rulers many believed in Him, but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue; 43 for they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God.

The next passage we'll consider is Romans 10:8-11. This passage associates confession with belief as a condition to salvation.

Romans 10:8-11. 8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): 9 that if you **confess** with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth **confession** is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

The next passage we'll consider is 1 John 1:7-10. This passage identifies that confession of sin is a condition for forgiveness and cleansing.

1 John 1:7-10. 7 But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. 9 If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. 10 If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us.

Summary: Our confession of Jesus is a condition to the forgiveness of our sins, which is required for our salvation.

Calling on the Name of the Lord

There are two passages that use the phrase "call on the name of the Lord" in relation to salvation or in conjunction with the forgiveness of sins, which is effectively the same.

Acts 2:21. 21 And it shall come to pass That whoever calls on the name of the LORD Shall be saved.'

Acts 22:16. 16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

What does it mean to "call on the name of the Lord"? Like confession, it is more than saying the words. It is much like confession where we acknowledge Jesus as our Savior. It possesses a sense of reliance on God. If we are going to call on Him, there must be an expectation that He will, and can help. Salvation comes through the blood of Christ, so there must be an understanding of Jesus' sacrifice, which is what cleanses us from our sins. "Calling on the name of the Lord" requires that we understand the gospel story. It is our way of appealing to God for help.

Baptism

There are several passages in the New Testament that refer to baptism. Most people acknowledge that New Testament Christians took part in baptism. The question is not whether man should be baptized, but whether the waters of baptism have any affect on our salvation. Does the New Testament relate “baptism” to salvation or the forgiveness of sins, which is a condition for salvation?

Baptism Related Passages

After Jesus had been resurrected from the dead, he met with His disciples to comfort them and teach them what they should do as they continued in His ministry; they were to teach the gospel of Jesus Christ to the world. In **Mark 16:15-16** Jesus tells the apostles:

Mark 16:15-16. 15 And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

Jesus is instructing his disciples to teach the gospel. Verse 16 identifies the results the apostles will see from those who hear their teaching. Those who will be “*saved*” are the ones “*who believes and is baptized*”. Both **belief** and **baptism** are associated with salvation. Both are equal regarding the associated result of being “*saved*”. For someone to “*not*” be saved, it only requires that the one who hears, “*not believe*”. As we mentioned on page 2 of this discussion,

“Faith is the most obvious of God’s instructions that is required in order to be His child. It is the first step. If someone does not believe, they will have no desire to follow any of God’s instructions. It is the primary ingredient that makes everything come together.”

In Mark 16:15-16, God tells us what those who hear the gospel need to do in order to be saved, which is belief and baptism.

The next passage we will consider is **1 Peter 3:18-20**.

1 Peter 3:18-22. 18 For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 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, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

1 Peter 3:18 teaches the message of the gospel in a “nut shell”: Jesus’ death and resurrection makes our relationship with God possible. The key to our discussion lies in verses 20-21 beginning with the comparison made to “the days of Noah” regarding the saving of the eight souls through water. To explain the context of this passage, we will go back to the account of Noah in the book of Genesis.

Genesis 6:5-8. 5 Then the LORD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every intent of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. 6 And the LORD was sorry that He had made man on the earth, and He was grieved in His heart. 7 So the LORD said, "I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth, both man and beast, creeping thing and birds of the air, for I am sorry that I have made them." 8 But Noah found grace in the eyes of the LORD.

Genesis 6:5-7 identifies that the wickedness of man was so great, that God decided to destroy the earth. His method of destruction was the flood. As we continue to read the story, the only people that survived the flood were Noah and his family because of Noah was righteous (**Genesis 7:1**) and found grace in the eyes of the Lord.

- **Genesis 7:1** Then the LORD said to Noah, "Come into the ark, you and all your household, because I have seen that you are righteous before Me in this generation.

The wickedness of the world is the reason God destroyed the earth. 1 Peter 3:20 references this event: “*in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.*” We need to ask ourselves, how were these eight souls “*saved through water*”. This account in Genesis actually associates multiple things to Noah’s salvation. Genesis 6:8 identifies that “*Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord*”. So, God’s grace saved Noah. As we read the story, we see that the ark saved Noah from the flooding waters. So the ark also had a part in saving Noah. 1 Peter 3:20 says they “*were saved through water*”. To understand how those eight souls were “*saved through water*”, let’s ask ourselves, “What was the purpose of the water?” The purpose of the water was to “*destroy from under heaven all flesh in which is the breath of life*” (Genesis 6:17) and this was because of the wickedness/sinfulness of man. When the water destroyed mankind, it destroyed the sinfulness and wickedness in the world. Noah and his family were saved from being exposed to the sinfulness and wickedness that was before them day after day. Noah and his family “*were saved through water*” because the water took away the incredible amount of sinfulness that was in the world.

Understanding this comparison is important because Noah being “*saved through water*” is compared to how baptism saves us (3:21). Here is the passage again beginning with the comparison.

1 Peter 3:20-22. ... when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 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, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right

Simply stated, the waters of baptism saves those who believe in Jesus in the same manner as the water saved Noah. In the same way that God used water to take evilness out of the world in the days of Noah, God uses the waters of baptism to take away the sin that stains our lives. Verse 21, in the New King James version, uses the term “antitype”, which is not a word we use very often today. To help us better understand this term, the NIV and King James versions are below along with a definition of the Greek term for “antitype” from Strong’s Concordance.

1 Peter 3:21. (NIV) 21 and this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also--not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

1 Peter 3:21. (King James) 21 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:

Antitype – 499. antitupon, an-teet'-oo-pon; neut. of a comp. of G473 and G5179; corresponding ["an titype"], i.e. a representative, counterpart:--(like) figure (whereunto).

From 1 Peter 3:20-22, we understand that the illustration of “Noah being saved through water” represents baptism that saves those who desire to follow Christ, according to His resurrection. The parenthetical comment in verse 21 identifies that this baptism (which is in water) is not for the purpose of removing dirt from the flesh (like a bath), but it is the way we appeal to God as an “answer” or “pledge” of what is in our hearts. This comparison identifies that water baptism has a part in our salvation in the same way the water saved Noah. The flood waters in the days of Noah removed wickedness and sin from the earth. The waters of baptism for the Christian also “save” and it can only “save” if it also plays a part in removing sin from the lives of those who have a good conscience toward God. In the same way that God’s grace saved Noah, God’s grace saves us today by the blood of Christ. God used the ark to save Noah also. God uses his message as well as messengers to save us as they preached His word. God also saved Noah through the waters of the flood. God also saves us through the waters of baptism. It isn’t that there is anything special in the water nor is there any boasting we can do of ourselves because we are baptized. It is simply a method God chose to use in order to extend His grace to us.

The next passage we will consider is **Acts 2:36-39**. This passage is the conclusion of the first gospel sermon that took place on the day of Pentecost after the apostles received the Holy Spirit in the form of miraculous gifts, specifically, speaking in tongues.

Acts 2:36-39. 36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." 37 Now when they

heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 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. 39 "For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call." 40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation." 41 Then those who gladly received his word were **baptized**; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

At the conclusion of the sermon, the Jews were "*cut to the heart*" (2:37) by the message that was preached. The message affected them and they believed it enough to ask the apostles "*what shall we do?*" (2:37). Peter responds that every one of them were to "*repent*" and "*be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins*" (2:38). Notice the reason they were to "repent" and "be baptized". It was so their sins could be "remitted", which is to be forgiven. We mentioned this passage earlier with respect to repentance and the conclusion is the same for baptism. The remission of sins is tied to "baptism". In order to be saved, our sins have to be forgiven. If we still have sin accounted toward us, we are not in a saved relationship with God. To "remit" sin is to be forgiven of those sins. Below is the definition from Strong's Concordance of the term "remission" found in Acts 2:38.

Remission – 859. aphasis, af-es-is; from G863; freedom; (fig.) pardon:--deliverance, forgiveness, liberty, remission.

Acts 2:38 states that baptism (as well as repentance) are to be performed by the believer in order to have his sins forgiven. So, baptism plays a part in salvation because it is identified as something that needs to be done in order to have the forgiveness of sins.

The next passage we will consider is **Acts 22:6-16**. Preceding this passage, the Jews are angry with Paul and are about to literally tear him apart in the temple. Paul was saved by the Roman guards and he requested an opportunity to speak to the people. In his discourse with the Jews, Paul tells them about his journey to Damascus when he was persecuting Christians. He tells of being struck down on the road by a bright light and his conversation with Jesus.

Acts 22:12-16. 6 "Now it happened, as I journeyed and came near Damascus at about noon, suddenly a great light from heaven shone around me. 7 "And I fell to the ground and heard a voice saying to me, 'Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting Me?' 8 "So I answered, 'Who are You, Lord?' And He said to me, 'I am Jesus of Nazareth, whom you are persecuting.' 9 "And those who were with me indeed saw the light and were afraid, but they did not hear the voice of Him who spoke to me. 10 "So I said, 'What shall I do, Lord?' And the Lord said to me, 'Arise and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do.' 11 "And since I could not see for the glory of that light, being led by the hand of those who were with me, I came into Damascus. 12 "Then a certain Ananias, a devout man according to the law, having a good testimony with all the Jews who dwelt there, 13 "came to me;

and he stood and said to me, 'Brother Saul, receive your sight.' And at that same hour I looked up at him. 14 "Then he said, 'The God of our fathers has chosen you that you should know His will, and see the Just One, and hear the voice of His mouth. 15 'For you will be His witness to all men of what you have seen and heard. 16 'And now why are you waiting? Arise and be **baptized**, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.'

Jesus tells Paul that Paul has been persecuting Him (22:7-9). After the conversation, Paul asks "*What shall I do, Lord?*" (22:10) and Paul follows the instructions given by Jesus, which is to go into the city where he will be told what he needs to do. To begin with, Paul realizes he needs to do something. He has been convicted by his experience with Jesus on the road to Damascus and he is ready to act on that conviction. Secondly, he addresses Jesus as "Lord". This indicates that Paul believed the one addressing him was worthy of respect and after learning it was Jesus, he continued to refer to Him as Lord. This is a change of heart since Paul was persecuting Christians. Notice, that Jesus did not really answer Paul's question by telling him what to do. Jesus told Paul to "*go into Damascus, and there you will be told all things which are appointed for you to do*". Paul then, not only followed Jesus' instruction, but when he got to the city, he prayed and fasted for 3 days (Acts 9:9-11). Paul's actions clearly indicate that he "believed" in Jesus and was waiting for the instruction Jesus told Paul he would receive. God then sends Ananias to tell Paul what he needs to do. Ananias tells Paul that God has selected him for a special mission, to "*be His witness to all men*". Ananias then tells Paul in verse 22:16, "*And now why are you waiting? Arise and be **baptized**, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.*" Paul already believed in Jesus while on the road to Damascus. Not only did he believe, but he followed Jesus' instruction to go into the city and wait for further instruction. He did this prayerfully and with fasting. Even so, Paul was still in a position where he needed his sins to be washed away. Paul still had his sin, even after his experience with Jesus on the road to Damascus. Ananias tells Paul to stop waiting and to wash away his sins by being baptized. In doing so, he would be calling on the name of the Lord. Paul's submission to the instruction to be baptized culminates Paul's appeal to God for the forgiveness of sins. Having our sins forgiven is synonymous with salvation.

The next passage we will consider is **Romans 6:1-6**. This passage parallels baptism with the death of Jesus and His burial.

Romans 6:1-6. 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 3 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. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Baptism is described as sharing in the death of Christ Jesus (6:3). Baptism is a burial in the same way that Christ was buried in the tomb after He died (6:4). The stated purpose of this baptism is that we may “*walk in newness of life*” (6:4). As Christ rose from the dead, we rise from our burial to “*walk in the newness of life*” (6:4). This new life is associated with what follows the burial, i.e., baptism. By sharing in the “*likeness of His death*”, i.e., baptism, “*we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection*” (6:5), i.e., salvation. The old man, the sinful man, was crucified and “*done away with*” (6:6) as part of the process that includes baptism. Baptism has all the components of salvation associated to it: newness of life, likeness of His resurrection, and the sinful man being done away with.

The next passage we will consider is **Galatians 3:22-27**. Here is some background to this passage. The book of Galatians addresses an issue regarding those who would pervert the gospel of Christ (**Galatians 1:7**). There are those who were attempting to require Christians to be circumcised, which was an Old Law requirement they felt was necessary in order to be acceptable to God. The book of Galatians addresses this problem and emphasizes that the system of “faith in Jesus Christ” supersedes the Old Law. Paul identifies that if you require someone to keep part of the law, i.e. circumcision, you would have to keep the whole law (perfectly) (**Galatians 5:3-5**). The only way salvation could be attained under the Old Law was if someone kept it perfectly, which no one could do. None of us are worthy of salvation except through the blood of Christ which was shed for our sins. Our justification comes by our faith in Jesus.

- **Galatians 1:6-7.** 6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel, 7 which is not another; but there are some who trouble you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ.
- **Galatians 5:3-5.** 3 And I testify again to every man who becomes circumcised that he is a debtor to keep the whole law. 4 You have become estranged from Christ, you who attempt to be justified by law; you have fallen from grace. 5 For we through the Spirit eagerly wait for the hope of righteousness by faith.

Now, we’ll look at Galatians 3:22-27.

Galatians 3:22-27. 22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe. 23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed. 24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith. 25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor. 26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were **baptized** into Christ have put on Christ.

Paul states that we “*are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus*” (3:26). How do we become sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus? Paul begins the next sentence (3:27) with the word “For”. This signifies that what is about to be said in verse 27 is based on

what is stated in verse 26. Those who were “*baptized into Christ have put on Christ*”. The way we put on Christ is through baptism. What is the result of “putting on Christ”? As identified in verse 26, it is becoming a son of God through faith in Christ Jesus. Baptism plays a key role in becoming a child of God.

Summary: Baptism is stated as a condition to receive the forgiveness of our sins, and specifically stated as a requirement that we may be saved.

Conclusion

The scriptures identify that more than “simple faith” is related to God’s plan of salvation. In this study, we have seen that belief/faith, repentance, confession, calling on the name of the Lord, and baptism are equally associated with salvation. Therefore, we must treat each of them with the same level of importance, following all of God’s instructions relating to salvation. We can’t set any one of these above the other. We are responsible to all of God’s instruction. God expects us to live according to all his words (Matthew 4:3-4).

- **Matthew 4:3-4.** 3 Now when the tempter came to Him, he said, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, "It is written, 'Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.'"

I would like to encourage you to meditate on these scriptures. Where I have attempted to provide some commentary on the passages, I realize that my words are the words of a man. Take the scriptures and come to a conclusion in your own mind of what these scriptures are teaching. Most of us come from different backgrounds where we have been taught about God by people we love and trust. Even so, each of us is responsible as individuals to understand what God is telling us according to His scriptures. What “I think”, really has nothing to do with what is right. We all need to bring what “we think” in line with what the scriptures teach through study and meditation, because we all are responsible for understanding the scriptures and reconciling them together to understand “truth”. Do these passages teach you something you didn’t know before you studied them? If so, are you willing to change your position on this topic? I only want to encourage you to do what God wants you to do because God is worthy of our praise and we praise Him through our obedience to His word. In all things, to God be the glory! Thank you for your effort in studying this subject. I am available for further study if you would like to discuss them further.