

DO YOU AGREE WITH JESUS?

QUESTION: Is baptism essential for salvation?

No other aspect of God's plan of salvation creates as much discussion and dissension as does baptism. We readily recognize that there are many things involved in salvation from our sins. Grace, mercy, longsuffering, and the blood of Christ are extended to us from the Divine perspective. Man's response to these provisions for the forgiveness of our sins generally sparks some controversy. The majority of those who claim to follow Christ will agree that faith in Jesus as the Son of God is essential to the forgiveness of sins (John 8:24). Most will aver that repentance is necessary to be saved from sin (Luke 13:3, 5). Many will have no qualms about the need to confess Jesus in order to be saved (Romans 10:9-10). However, large numbers object to the notion that baptism is essential for salvation from sin. Are these objections justified? Is baptism necessary for one to be saved, or is it merely a work of merit whereby man attempts to earn salvation?

Jesus states, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned" (Mark 16:16). There could be no more straightforward way to say that baptism is essential for man's salvation than the words Jesus spoke as stated above. Some quibble that Jesus did not say "he that believeth not and is not baptized shall be condemned." Consider the folly of such. Why would anyone who does not believe in Jesus submit to being baptized? One who does not believe is condemned already, whether or not he obeys the command to be baptized.

Baptism apart from grace, mercy, the blood of Christ, faith, repentance, and confession serves only to get one wet. When coupled with these things, Jesus said that baptism saves! Too much time and energy are wasted in an effort to circumvent this Divine commandment. We would do well to submit ourselves to every Divine precept. The fact remains that Jesus coupled together active, obedient faith with baptism, and such leads to salvation from past sins. Have you been baptized in order to be saved? Do not delay your obedience any longer!

Do you have a question that you would like for us to consider together, or a comment regarding what has been written? If so, please contact us at sixthavenue@bellsouth.net, or write to us at the Sixth Avenue Church of Christ, 1501 Sixth Avenue, Jasper, Alabama, 35501.