

Baptism and Salvation

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by

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Preface

This paper, which may someday become a book, is written to examine an important theological question: "Is Baptism Necessary for Salvation?" There are several different viewpoints on this question.

Baptismal Regeneration--This is the viewpoint of the Roman Catholic Church, the Eastern Orthodox Church, some Pentecostal sects (notably the anti-trinitarian United Pentecostal Church and other "Jesus Only" groups), and pseudo-christian cult groups such as the Mormons. Baptismal Regeneration is also the doctrinal stance of many teachers and preachers within the Restoration Movement, sometimes called Campbellism (from its founder, Alexander Campbell), whose members are mainly found in churches called Churches of Christ or Independent Christian Churches. People who hold to baptismal regeneration would argue that water baptism is an essential part of salvation because, in their view, it is in the act or ceremony of water baptism that we are born again.

Necessary Obedience--In this view, baptism is a part of a process necessary for salvation. The several steps of this process are: repentance, faith, confession, baptism, and perpetual obedience in life. Some "Campbellites," some Baptists, and some independent evangelicals hold to this viewpoint.

Ultra-Dispensationalists and Quakers--deny that water baptism is appropriate in this age. In their viewpoint, the Baptism of the Spirit replaced water baptism, which was a transitory ordinance.

The Covenant View--Held by conservative Lutherans, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, and Methodists, is that baptism is the New Testament equivalent to circumcision, and should be performed on new converts and on the infant children of believers as a sign of the covenant.

The Common Evangelical View--This view, held by the overwhelming majority of Bible-believing Christians, Baptists in particular, is that baptism and the Lord's Supper are ceremonies, or ordinances, given by Christ as signs and memorials to indicate inward realities. As the Lord's Supper is a remembrance and proclamation of the death of Christ on the Cross and is an expression of the unity of the Body of Christ, Water Baptism is a confession and declaration of the inward reality of salvation in the life of a new convert.

As I examine this question, I will confine the discussion to the common evangelical view of baptism in contrast to any view which makes water baptism a necessary part of salvation. Rather than spend much time examining the counterfeit views or quoting their teachers, I will concentrate on demonstrating the teaching of Scripture. The discussion, however, is only partly about Water Baptism--the real question is "What is the Nature of Salvation?" Once we have answered that question, we can understand the place of Water Baptism. This paper is organized into the following chapters:

1. Proper Biblical Interpretation
2. Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)
3. Sola Fide (Faith Alone)
4. The Perseverance of the Saints
5. Holy Spirit Baptism
6. Water Baptism--The Form and Practice of the Early Church

Chapter 1 Proper Biblical Interpretation

One of the great difficulties in this or any doctrinal discussion is the issue of proper Biblical interpretation. If we are discussing the Bible, we have to understand how to interpret it. It is easy to make a proud declaration, "I let the Bible speak for itself," or "I let the Bible interpret itself," but all who interpret the Bible say something like that, yet differ on many issues. All students of the Bible, no matter how pristine they claim to be, use interpretative methods.

1. The first issue in Biblical interpretation is, "What is your authority?"

There are several answers to this question. This is really one of the most important questions, for if I have a different authority base than another man, we are very unlikely to ever come to agreement on anything. There are various answers to this question:

a. The Whole Bible, in the context of the fully revealed "Faith Once Delivered," and in view of the appropriate interrelation between the Old and New Covenants, as revealed in the New Testament.

This is the normal authority base for conservative evangelicals, because we recognize that this is really the authority base authorized by Jesus and used by the Apostles. Several facts stand out in this regard:

- (1) Jesus made it plain that no part of the law was to be done away with until fulfilled (Mat 5:17-19).
- (2) The ceremonial and sacrificial aspects of the Old Covenant temple worship were removed in the Cross (the Book of Hebrews explains this).
- (3) Circumcision and the dietary laws are not ceremonial requirements for Christians. The dietary laws were removed by Christ Himself in His vision to Peter, and this vision was confirmed by the church council in Acts 15 and emphasized in Galatians and other epistles.
- (4) Some of the prophecies of the Old Covenant prophets were fulfilled in the ministry of Christ, but not all of them, for many Old Testament prophecies refer to the second coming of Christ.
- (5) The normal day of worship was changed to Sunday by the apostles (Acts 20:7).
- (6) The cross removed the barriers which had kept most gentiles (all but a very few proselytes) out of the covenant (Eph 2:11 and following).
- (7) However, much of the Old Testament remains authoritative. In fact, many of the most vital doctrines of the faith are ONLY fully explained in the Old Testament.
 - (a) In the Old Testament alone do we learn the full teaching of the attributes of God, in such passages as Job 42:1-6, Isaiah 40, and many of the Psalms.
 - (b) In the Old Testament, we learn much about the nature of sin itself--Paul, in his summary on the nature and effects of sin in Romans 3:9-20 quotes the O.T. profusely.
 - (c) In the Old Testament, we have some of the most vital verses for understanding the nature of the Trinity and of the Deity of Christ. The writer to the Hebrews, in his masterful exclamation of the glories of Christ in Chapter 1, again, quotes the O.T. from several places.
 - (d) The gospel can be preached from many places in the Old Testament. Jesus preached the gospel from the O.T. AFTER His resurrection (Luk 24:25-27). The apostles and prophets in the preached from the Old Testament. In his declaration to Timothy about the Bible (quoted below) Paul was speaking of the Old Testament, for the New was not even completed yet.

2 Tim 3:14 But you must continue in the things which you have learned and been assured of, knowing from whom you have learned them,

2 Tim 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

2 Tim 3:16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness,

2 Tim 3:17 that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.

b. The New Testament only.

This is the normal authority base for those in the Restoration Movement, known variously as Campbellites (for their founder, Alexander Campbell), Church of Christ, Independent Christian Churches, etc. They actually claim to recognize the entire Bible, but they really will accept no scriptures from the Old Testament as having any authority in any discussion, no matter what the context. In this viewpoint, they resemble the teachings of the ancient gnostic heretic, Marcion, who subtracted from the Bible in much the same manner as they.

c. The whole Bible, plus the prophetic revelations of modern-day prophets.

Many cults and isms, and some Pentecostal and Charismatic groups would be in this camp. Most evangelicals, however, agree that the prohibition against adding to the last book of the Bible written (Revelation) means that the canon (list of scriptural books) is closed, and no divine revelation, spoken or written, may be added to the Bible we have.

Rev 22:18 For I testify to everyone who hears the words of the prophecy of this book: If anyone adds to these things, God will add to him the plagues that are written in this book;

d. The Bible, plus some extra books, plus the declarations of the church councils, plus the determinations of the “doctors of the church,” plus the ex cathedra declarations of the Pope.

This, of course, is the Roman Catholic position.

e. The Bible, minus those things which are no longer “culturally relevant.”

This is the position of many evangelicals who are giving in to the first inroads of liberalism.

Rev 22:19 and if anyone takes away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part from the Book of Life, from the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book.

f. The Bible, minus anything I don’t like--this is the common position of many people in pews.

2. There are several rules which I would suggest for interpreting the Bible.

These rules are mainly derived from the common rules of language, and are not themselves of any particular authority, but I believe you will find they hold true.

a. Context--context is a very important concept.

You cannot rip a verse from its immediate surroundings and make it say something it doesn’t mean. In any language, words, phrases, and sentences mean what they mean in relation to the words, phrases and sentences around them.

(1) The most important context is the historical-grammatical context of a verse or passage. To whom was it written? What is the internal context of the book or chapter? What is the topic under discussion? What is the common linguistic meaning of the actual words said?

(2) The second most important context is “the analogy of the faith.” By that, I mean the sum total of Biblical comment on any topic. For example, a verse (such as Jn 14:10) may SEEM to teach, for instance, that Jesus the Messiah is (NOT “The Lord of me and The God of me” (literal translation of Jn 20:28), but the analogy of the faith teaches us that Jesus is “very God of very God.” In any passage that bears upon a doctrinal area, its apparent meaning must be submitted to the test of the analogy of the faith. We must, as Paul says, compare spiritual things with spiritual. (1 Cor 2:13). If I have forty verses that teach a

particular thing, and there are two or three verses which SEEM on the surface to contradict the forty, then I really need to examine the two or three, not overthrow the forty.

b. The Linguistic Test --What do the words and phrases mean?

If the plain sense of a verse fits the test of context (including agreement with the general teaching of the Bible on that subject) and definition, the plain sense is the right sense.

(1) What do the words mean in the original? This is touchy, for a “little Greek or Hebrew is a dangerous thing.” An original language dictionary may help, or it may hinder. In general, our more conservative translations convey the literal meaning of the words very well, especially the King James, New King James, and New American Standard translations. Original language studies can *clarify* or *amplify* meaning, but they will rarely change the meaning of the phrase in the common English translations.

(2) In consideration of definition, a linguistic test that is usually far more meaningful than original language analysis is “how is a word used elsewhere in the Scriptures?”

c. One needs to distinguish between “is” and “ought” scriptures--

(1) An “is” scripture is a narrative, such as the historical accounts in the OT, or such as the historical accounts in the gospels and Acts. An “is” scripture may contain didactic elements, but is in the main an historical account. An “is” tells you what happened or what was said, but does not often explain the meaning of the events or statements.

(2) An “ought” scripture is didactic, declarative, and explanatory. An “ought” makes statements and explains the statements, often explaining prior events as well. Examples are the longer discourses of the Lord, the sermons in Acts, and the epistles. You never interpret an “ought” by an “is,” but rather, you explain the “is” by the “ought.”

(In addition, there are the “do what?” scriptures--”do what?” is an exclamatory expression in the Appalachian dialect, which expresses exasperation and puzzlement at the event or statement which generated the exclamatory reaction. “Do What?” scriptures would include the Apocalypse and the obscure prophetic passages in the OT. Hermeneutically, I am just very careful how I handle these passages, and tend not to make any sweeping conclusions from them.)

Chapter 2 Sola Gratia (Grace Alone)

Saved by Grace Eph 2:8-10

In all the vastness of our world, in all of the diversity of religious beliefs, there are only two essential types of belief, works and Grace. There seem to be many differences between the world’s religions, but they are all essentially the same--they all center around human works. All involve human beings accomplishing a task or set of tasks to achieve a goal and receive a reward. The tasks may be different, the goal may have differing names, and the reward may be called many things (Heaven Paradise, Nirvana), but the principle underlying all of them is the same--Quid Pro Quo, which is Latin for “this for that.” In the world’s religions, salvation (righteousness, oneness with the Infinite, perfect nothingness, or whatever is the term in a particular religion) is earned by what one does. Unfortunately, within this group of religions based on human effort are many species of religion that go by the name of Christianity.

True Bible Christianity, however, “the faith once delivered to the saints,” is totally distinct from the world’s religions in this area as in so many others. The thing that makes Christianity far different from all other religions is the concept of Grace. To help us understand the difference, we need to look at the at the two basic paradigms for all religions. (A Paradigm is a model, an outline, a form that something takes, that we can diagram to help us understand it.)

Paradigm #1: Works (Followed by most religions, including much of “Christianity.”)

World Religions	“Christian” Version
1 We work our way to God, salvation, Nirvana, Paradise	In salvation, we are returned to where Adam was before the Fall.
2 God (or whatever represents deity) judges our progress as we go along	Even after “salvation,” We still have God as our Judge
3 Attainment of Godhood, salvation, Paradise, Nirvana depends upon us	Our will and our efforts determine whether or not we go to heaven

Paradigm #2: Salvation by Grace

1. Salvation is 100 percent a work of God--we are unable, because of our bondage to sin and rebellion, to do anything meriting God’s favor.
2. God reaches down to save people--He conceived the plan, He sent His Son to accomplish the plan--He does 100% of the work.
3. When we experience what the Bible calls the New Birth (Jn 3:3-8), we are then SAVED, we pass from death to life (Eph 2:1-6, Jn 5:24, 6:40, 6:47).
4. As a part of the gift of Salvation, we become adopted children of God (Gal 3:26-4:7).
5. When we sin, God deals with us as a Father to a child (Heb 12:4-8).
6. God’s Grace and actions are the determining factors in our salvation, even to include His working in our lives to develop a lifestyle consistent with salvation. (Eph 2:8-10, Phil. 2:12-13)

You might ask, “If this is all a work of God, where do I fit in the process?” The answer is you must believe, you must exercise faith in Christ for salvation. (Rom 10:9-13, Acts 16:30-31). This exercise is not a work, however, because it involves no ability on our part and no effort on our part. That is the hard thing to understand about faith--it is not an action, it is a surrender, a throwing up of the hands and saying, “I can do nothing in myself.”

1. Undeserved Grace--Eph 2:1-3

The Grace of God is so simple, yet so profound that it is beyond the greatest minds to fully understand. It stands in opposition to the ideas that most of us have about earning our way in the world, about people getting what they deserve, about “fairness,” and about the independence of human beings. The best simple definition this writer has ever heard for Grace is God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense. The meaning of Grace behind that simple explanation is one of the most hated teachings in the world because it so totally undermines and removes all traces of human pride. The Doctrine of Grace teaches that we are totally unable to save ourselves, to help in our salvation, to do anything to merit all or any part of our salvation, or to keep our salvation. We are saved totally as an act of God’s will, and we do not deserve it in any way. Indeed, those that are saved are equally (if not more) deserving of Hell as those who actually go there! This is the most important first principle in understanding Grace--no one in the entire human race deserves any consideration from God, we are all rebels and sinners, and we all deserve Hell. Except for His own redemption plan, God could rightfully have sent the entire human race to eternal punishment long ago! The description Paul gives of believers before salvation fits the entire human race if they are without Christ.

a. What is Grace?

- (1) God’s unmerited favor?

As A.W. Pink said, it is not just unmerited favor that constitutes Grace--it is favor shown where there is positive demerit. To show kindness to a stranger is not Grace, but to show kindness to an enemy, that is Grace.

(2) G-R-A-C-E

God's
Riches
At
Christ's
Expense

b. The objects of His Grace

(1) Spiritually dead sinners--

Eph 2:1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

(2) Servants of the enemy--

Eph 2:2 in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,

(3) Enemies of God by nature--1 Cor 2:14,

Romans 8:6-8 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able *to do so*; and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.

Eph 2:3 among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.

2. God's Grace--Unsought

Eph 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Eph 2:5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Eph 2:6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

Eph 2:7 that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Isaiah 64:6-7 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. And there is no one who calls on Thy name, Who arouses himself to take hold of Thee; For Thou hast hidden Thy face from us, And hast delivered us into the power of our iniquities.

Romans 3:9-11 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God;

3. God's Grace--His Work What is the meaning of Grace?

- We were dead spiritually; we were fit for nothing but wrath; we were rebels and in bondage to sin and Satan.
- In the midst of that condition, God saved us.
- We exercised faith, which is itself a gift of God (Jn 6:44-47), and God blessed us with the greatest possible gift--eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord! (Jn 5:24, 6:37-40).

- What is more, we can add nothing to Grace. Before we were saved, we had nothing to contribute to the process (Rom 3:10-11, 1 Cor 2:14, Job 14:4, Jer. 13:23), and During the New Birth experience, we add nothing to it. Indeed, to try to add any human works to grace destroys grace.
Rom 11:5 Even so then, at this present time there is a remnant according to the election of grace.
Rom 11:6 And if by grace, then it is no longer of works; otherwise grace is no longer grace. But if it is of works, it is no longer grace; otherwise work is no longer work.
Eph 2:8 For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
Eph 2:9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.
Eph 2:10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

Other Grace Verses

Acts 15:11 “But we believe that through the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ we shall be saved in the same manner as they.”

Acts 18:27 And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace;

Acts 20:24 “But none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself, so that I may finish my race with joy, and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify to the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:32 “So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

Rom 1:5 Through Him we have received grace and apostleship for obedience to the faith among all nations for His name,

Rom 1:7 To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Rom 4:4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

Rom 4:16 Therefore it is of faith that it might be according to grace, so that the promise might be sure to all the seed, not only to those who are of the law, but also to those who are of the faith of Abraham, who is the father of us all

Rom 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Rom 5:15 But the free gift is not like the offense. For if by the one man’s offense many died, much more the grace of God and the gift by the grace of the one Man, Jesus Christ, abounded to many.

Rom 6:14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace.

Rom 6:15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not!

1 Cor 1:4 I thank my God always concerning you for the grace of God which was given to you by Christ Jesus,

1 Cor 3:10 According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it.

1 Cor 15:10 But by the grace of God I am what I am, and His grace toward me was not in vain; but I labored more abundantly than they all, yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me.

2 Cor 1:12 For our boasting is this: the testimony of our conscience that we conducted ourselves in the world in simplicity and godly sincerity, not with fleshly wisdom but by the grace of God, and more abundantly toward you.

Gal 1:6 I marvel that you are turning away so soon from Him who called you in the grace of Christ, to a different gospel,

Gal 1:15 But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb and called me through His grace,

Gal 2:9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

Gal 2:21 "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness comes through the law, then Christ died in vain."

Eph 1:6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the Beloved.

Eph 1:7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace

Eph 3:2 if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,

Eph 3:7 of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.

Eph 3:8 To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

Eph 4:7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift.

2 Th 1:12 that the name of our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified in you, and you in Him, according to the grace of our God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Tim 1:9 who has saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace which was given to us in Christ Jesus before time began,

2 Tim 2:1 You therefore, my son, be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.

Titus 2:11 For the grace of God that brings salvation has appeared to all men,

Titus 3:7 that having been justified by His grace we should become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

Heb 2:9 But we see Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels, for the suffering of death crowned with glory and honor, that He, by the grace of God, might taste death for everyone.

Heb 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.

Heb 12:15 looking carefully lest anyone fall short of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up cause trouble, and by this many become defiled;

Heb 12:28 Therefore, since we are receiving a kingdom which cannot be shaken, let us have grace, by which we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear.

Heb 13:9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be established by grace, not with foods which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

1 Pet 1:10 Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace that would come to you,

1 Pet 1:13 Therefore gird up the loins of your mind, be sober, and rest your hope fully upon the grace that is to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;

Chapter 3 **Sola Fide (Faith Alone)**

What does the term "Justified" mean? The Bible meaning of the word is to be totally blameless and totally guiltless--to be able to stand before God clean and pure in every way. A play on the word helps us to understand its meaning. If I am Justified, it is Just-as-if-I'd never sinned, and Just-as-if-I'd always been holy and done the right things. Remember our helpless position before God--as "children of Wrath," we are unable to satisfy God--all His lovely and perfect Law can do is condemn us.

Rom 3:19 Now we know that whatever the law says, it says to those who are under the law, that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.

Rom 3:20 Therefore by the deeds of the law no flesh will be justified in His sight, for by the law is the knowledge of sin.

Our Father, however, has devised a plan and made a way for us to stand righteous before Him. He has sent His own Son as a Sacrifice on our behalf, (chapter 5) and those who believe in Him shall have everlasting life, and shall be seen as righteous in God's sight.

Rom 3:21 But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets,

Rom 3:22 even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe. For there is no difference;

Rom 3:23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God,

Rom 3:24 being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus,

Rom 3:25 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,

Rom 3:26 to demonstrate at the present time His righteousness, that He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.

Rom 3:27 Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? No, but by the law of faith.

Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith apart from the deeds of the law.

This righteousness we receive is imputed righteousness--that is a theological term which means righteousness is put to our account, just like a deposit put in our bank account by someone else. God legally declares us to be righteous, and puts that on our record in Heaven.

Rom 4:1 What then shall we say that Abraham our father has found according to the flesh?

Rom 4:2 For if Abraham was justified by works, he has something to boast about, but not before God.

Rom 4:3 For what does the Scripture say? "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Rom 4:4 Now to him who works, the wages are not counted as grace but as debt.

Rom 4:5 But to him who does not work but believes on Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is accounted for righteousness,

Rom 4:6 just as David also describes the blessedness of the man to whom God imputes righteousness apart from works:

Rom 4:7 "Blessed are those whose lawless deeds are forgiven, And whose sins are covered;

Rom 4:8 Blessed is the man to whom the LORD shall not impute sin."

The illustration on the next page shows a ledger, an account book. In order for you to understand the principle, do the following things:

1. Write your name by the words "Account Holder."
2. Using a black or blue pen, under the column labeled "Sins on Account," write some of your known sins--don't be bashful, put several in. Then imagine how many pages the real account is!
3. You can't put anything in the column that says "Good Works Done," because you have none (Is 64:6).
4. Now take a different pen--a bright RED one, and across the "Sins on Account" column, write in large letters, "Paid for by Christ's Blood!"
5. Under the "Good Works Done" column, write again in RED, "Supplied by the Righteousness of Christ."

Eternal Account

Account Holder: _____

GOOD WORKS DONE	SINS ON ACCOUNT
1	1
2	2

3	3
4	4
5	5
6	6
7	7
8	8
9	9
10	10
11	11
12	12
13	13
14	14

And how does one come to this faith? it happens when the lost person hears the preaching of the word and places his or her faith in Christ, and confesses that faith before others.

Rom 10:8 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):

Rom 10:9 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.

Rom 10:10 For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Rom 10:11 For the Scripture says, “Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame.”

Rom 10:12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him.

Rom 10:13 For “whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.”

Rom 10:14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?

Rom 10:15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: “How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, Who bring glad tidings of good things!”

Rom 10:16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, “Lord, who has believed our report?”

Rom 10:17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

This is Justification, to stand before God with all accounts paid, and clothed in the righteousness of His only Son, Jesus Christ. To be able know that you have “peace with God”--there is no more war between you and the Almighty. (Rom 5:1). Taken together, the concepts of Grace and Justification by Faith show the uniqueness of the Christian doctrine of Salvation. It is like the exclamation of Jonah--”Salvation is of the LORD!” (Jonah 2:9, KJV). The message of Grace is God Saves Sinners. It is His Plan, it was His Son who died and rose again, it is His Spirit who enlivens the preaching and witness of believers to awaken sinners to their need of salvation and lead them to faith in Christ. Three of the watchwords of the revival of Biblical preaching known as the Reformation were: Sola Fide (Faith alone), Sola Gratia (Grace alone), and Sola Christi (Christ alone). These Latin terms describe God’s salvation plan in a nutshell--He has done it all, and we can claim no credit for ourselves. The result of this wonderful outpouring of His love is our salvation, and that results further in the fourth watchword: Soli Deo Gloria (The Glory to God alone).

There are many other verses which help us understand more about faith and salvation. Some are listed below.

John 1:12 But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name:

John 1:13 who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up,

John 3:15 "that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life.

John 3:16 "For God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life.

John 3:18 "He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 3:36 "He who believes in the Son has everlasting life; and he who does not believe the Son shall not see life, but the wrath of God abides on him."

John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

John 6:29 Jesus answered and said to them, "This is the work of God, that you believe in Him whom He sent."

John 6:35 And Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. He who comes to Me shall never hunger, and he who believes in Me shall never thirst.

John 6:36 "But I said to you that you have seen Me and yet do not believe.

John 6:37 "All that the Father gives Me will come to Me, and the one who comes to Me I will by no means cast out.

John 6:38 "For I have come down from heaven, not to do My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 6:39 "This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day.

John 6:40 "And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:41 The Jews then complained about Him, because He said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven."

John 6:42 And they said, "Is not this Jesus, the son of Joseph, whose father and mother we know? How is it then that He says, 'I have come down from heaven'?"

John 6:43 Jesus therefore answered and said to them, "Do not murmur among yourselves.

John 6:44 "No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day.

John 6:45 "It is written in the prophets, 'And they shall all be taught by God.' Therefore everyone who has heard and learned from the Father comes to Me.

John 6:46 "Not that anyone has seen the Father, except He who is from God; He has seen the Father.

John 6:47 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

John 7:38 "He who believes in Me, as the Scripture has said, out of his heart will flow rivers of living water."

John 9:35 Jesus heard that they had cast him out; and when He had found him, He said to him, "Do you believe in the Son of God?"

John 11:25 Jesus said to her, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live.

John 11:26 "And whoever lives and believes in Me shall never die. Do you believe this?"

John 12:36 "While you have the light, believe in the light, that you may become sons of light." These things Jesus spoke, and departed, and was hidden from them.

John 12:44 Then Jesus cried out and said, "He who believes in Me, believes not in Me but in Him who sent Me.

John 12:46 "I have come as a light into the world, that whoever believes in Me should not abide in darkness.

John 14:1 "Let not your heart be troubled; you believe in God, believe also in Me.

John 14:12 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me, the works that I do he will do also; and greater works than these he will do, because I go to My Father.

John 20:29 Jesus said to him, "Thomas, because you have seen Me, you have believed. Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have believed."

John 20:31 but these are written that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that believing you may have life in His name.

Acts 10:43 "To Him all the prophets witness that, through His name, whoever believes in Him will receive remission of sins."

Acts 15:9 "and made no distinction between us and them, purifying their hearts by faith.

Acts 16:31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Acts 20:21 "testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Rom 9:33 As it is written: "Behold, I lay in Zion a stumbling stone and rock of offense, And whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame."

Rom 10:4 For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone who believes.

Gal 2:16 "knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified.

Gal 3:1 O foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you that you should not obey the truth, before whose eyes Jesus Christ was clearly portrayed among you as crucified?

Gal 3:2 This only I want to learn from you: Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?

Gal 3:3 Are you so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are you now being made perfect by the flesh?

Gal 3:4 Have you suffered so many things in vain; if indeed it was in vain?

Gal 3:5 Therefore He who supplies the Spirit to you and works miracles among you, does He do it by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?;

Gal 3:6 just as Abraham "believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness."

Gal 3:7 Therefore know that only those who are of faith are sons of Abraham.

Gal 3:8 And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel to Abraham beforehand, saying, "In you all the nations shall be blessed."

Gal 3:9 So then those who are of faith are blessed with believing Abraham.

Gal 3:10 For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who does not continue in all things which are written in the book of the law, to do them."

Gal 3:11 But that no one is justified by the law in the sight of God is evident, for "the just shall live by faith."

Gal 3:12 Yet the law is not of faith, but "the man who does them shall live by them."

Gal 3:13 Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree"),

Gal 3:14 that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.

Gal 3:15 Brethren, I speak in the manner of men: Though it is only a man's covenant, yet if it is confirmed, no one annuls or adds to it.

Gal 3:16 Now to Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He does not say, "And to seeds," as of many, but as of one, "And to your Seed," who is Christ.

Gal 3:17 And this I say, that the law, which was four hundred and thirty years later, cannot annul the covenant that was confirmed before by God in Christ, that it should make the promise of no effect.

Gal 3:18 For if the inheritance is of the law, it is no longer of promise; but God gave it to Abraham by promise.

Gal 3:19 What purpose then does the law serve? It was added because of transgressions, till the Seed should come to whom the promise was made; and it was appointed through angels by the hand of a mediator.

Gal 3:20 Now a mediator does not mediate for one only, but God is one.

Gal 3:21 Is the law then against the promises of God? Certainly not! For if there had been a law given which could have given life, truly righteousness would have been by the law.

Gal 3:22 But the Scripture has confined all under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe.

Gal 3:23 But before faith came, we were kept under guard by the law, kept for the faith which would afterward be revealed.

Gal 3:24 Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Gal 3:25 But after faith has come, we are no longer under a tutor.

Gal 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Gal 3:29 And if you are Christ's, then you are Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Eph 1:12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

Eph 1:13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

Eph 1:14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,

Phil 3:9 and be found in Him, not having my own righteousness, which is from the law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the righteousness which is from God by faith;

1 Tim 1:16 However, for this reason I obtained mercy, that in me first Jesus Christ might show all longsuffering, as a pattern to those who are going to believe on Him for everlasting life.

2 Tim 3:15 and that from childhood you have known the Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus.

1 Pet 2:6 Therefore it is also contained in the Scripture, "Behold, I lay in Zion A chief cornerstone, elect, precious, And he who believes on Him will by no means be put to shame."

1 Pet 2:7 Therefore, to you who believe, He is precious; but to those who are disobedient, "The stone which the builders rejected Has become the chief cornerstone,"

2 Pet 1:1 Simon Peter, a bondservant and apostle of Jesus Christ, To those who have obtained like precious faith with us by the righteousness of our God and Savior Jesus Christ:

1 John 3:23 And this is His commandment: that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ and love one another, as He gave us commandment.

1 John 5:4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world; our faith.

1 John 5:5 Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

1 John 5:10 He who believes in the Son of God has the witness in himself; he who does not believe God has made Him a liar, because he has not believed the testimony that God has given of His Son.

1 John 5:13 These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, that you may know that you have eternal life, and that you may continue to believe in the name of the Son of God.

Chapter 4

The Perseverance of the Saints

John 10:26-30

Introductory Thoughts

The doctrinal area we now enter is too often one of “sound bite” slogans--”Once Saved, Always Saved,” and “Falling From Grace.” It is also an area where extreme viewpoints tend to dominate, and where sober exegesis and doctrinal study are often subject to party theological lines rather than to what the Word of God really says. The real question we examine here is this: “Is it possible for a person who has been truly saved to lose their salvation?” I will tell you up front that the resounding Biblical answer is “NO!” The problem is, that this real question is lost in a fog of doctrinal misunderstandings, misrepresentations, and deviations from the subject, and both “sides” of this debate are guilty of these theological errata.

This doctrinal area is one where great care must be used to avoid giving false security, while at the same time giving encouragement to the weak brother or sister.

Much of what has been written, preached, and taught in favor of Perseverance (Eternal Security) is dangerous, because it is incomplete, and can lead to a false sense of security.

This false sense of security, combined with what is often in our day a very shallow and incomplete presentation of the gospel, leads to apostasy on a grand scale by those who were never truly saved. These false believers don’t understand salvation, they don’t have salvation, but they have made a profession of faith, and probably have identified with a local congregation.

Moreover, much of what is written and taught against the doctrine of Perseverance does not address the Biblical doctrine of Perseverance, but those who oppose Perseverance build up a false “straw man” doctrine to tear down. Unfortunately, there are those who preach and teach doctrines too close to the “straw man” for comfort. There really is such a thing as a false doctrine of eternal security. There really is such a thing as “carnal security” or “hell insurance”

1. The Nature of Salvation

a. Salvation in general

(1) Salvation is 100 percent a work of God--we are unable, because of our bondage to sin and rebellion, to do anything meriting God’s favor.

(2) God reaches down to save people--He conceived the plan, He sent His Son to accomplish the plan--He does 100% of the work.

(3) When we experience what the Bible calls the New Birth (Jn 3:3-8), we are then SAVED, we pass from death to life (Eph 2:1-6, Jn 5:24, 6:40, 6:47).

John 5:24 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

John 6:47 “Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life.

(4) As a part of the gift of Salvation, we become adopted children of God (Gal 3:26-4:7).

(5) When we sin, God deals with us as a Father to a child (Heb 12:4-8).

(6) God’s Grace and actions are the determining factors in our salvation, even to include His working in our lives to develop a lifestyle consistent with salvation. (Eph 2:8-10, Phil. 2:12-13)

b. The New Birth--the Spiritual Experience of Salvation

(1) Its nature

(a) God is the author of the New Birth

James 1:18 Of His own will He brought us forth by the word of truth, that we might be a kind of firstfruits of His creatures.

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Pet 1:22 Since you have purified your souls in obeying the truth through the Spirit in sincere love of the brethren, love one another fervently with a pure heart,

1 Pet 1:23 having been born again, not of corruptible seed but incorruptible, through the word of God which lives and abides forever,

Titus 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

Titus 3:6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

(b) The New Birth is totally out of our control, like the wind

John 1:13 Which were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

John 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

(c) The New Birth is a change of heart and a resurrection of our spirit

Eph 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

Eph 2:5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Eph 2:6 and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

John 5:21 "For as the Father raises the dead and gives life to them, even so the Son gives life to whom He will.

John 5:22 "For the Father judges no one, but has committed all judgment to the Son,

John 5:23 "that all should honor the Son just as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him.

John 5:24 "Most assuredly, I say to you, he who hears My word and believes in Him who sent Me has everlasting life, and shall not come into judgment, but has passed from death into life.

John 5:25 "Most assuredly, I say to you, the hour is coming, and now is, when the dead will hear the voice of the Son of God; and those who hear will live.

John 5:26 "For as the Father has life in Himself, so He has granted the Son to have life in Himself,

Ezek 36:26 "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

Ezek 36:27 "I will put My Spirit within you and cause you to walk in My statutes, and you will keep My judgments and do them.

(2) Its effects

(a) Indwelling Spirit

Rom 8:9 But you are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you. Now if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he is not His.

Rom 8:10 And if Christ is in you, the body is dead because of sin, but the Spirit is life because of righteousness.

Rom 8:11 But if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who dwells in you.

(b) Adoption

Rom 8:15 For you did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father."

Rom 8:16 The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God,

Gal 4:4 But when the fullness of the time had come, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the law,

Gal 4:5 to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption as sons.

Gal 4:6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, "Abba, Father!"

Gal 4:7 Therefore you are no longer a slave but a son, and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

(c) Two natures

Gal 5:16 I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh.

Gal 5:17 For the flesh lusts against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; and these are contrary to one another, so that you do not do the things that you wish.

c. Justification by Faith--The legal transaction of salvation.

(1) The nature of Justification--Legal Transaction

(a) Our sin is overwhelming, and we can do nothing about it--Rom 3:9-20

(b) God has made a way of justification through faith in Christ's blood--Rom 3:21-4:25

(2) The Author of Justification--God--Rom 3:21-26

(3) The effects of Justification

Isa 32:17 The work of righteousness will be peace, And the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance forever.

Rom 5:1 Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ,

Rom 5:2 through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

d. Salvation by Grace--the root cause of salvation

(1) Undeserved Grace--Eph 2:1-3

(2) Unsought Grace--"and That not of yourselves..."

Isaiah 64:6-7 For all of us have become like one who is unclean, And all our righteous deeds are like a filthy garment; And all of us wither like a leaf, And our iniquities, like the wind, take us away. And there is no one who calls on Thy name, Who arouses himself to take hold of Thee; For Thou hast hidden Thy face from us, And hast delivered us into the power of our iniquities.

Romans 3:9-11 What then? Are we better than they? Not at all; for we have already charged that both Jews and Greeks are all under sin; as it is written, "There is none righteous, not even one; There is none who understands, There is none who seeks for God;

(3) Amazing Grace--Eph 2:8-9

(4) Lasting Grace--Eph 2:10

e. Other Ideas related to the Saint's Perseverance

(1) Sheep don't become goats

(2) Children don't become non-children

2. The evidences of salvation--growth, fruit, and perseverance

2 Pet 1:5 But also for this very reason, giving all diligence, add to your faith virtue, to virtue knowledge,

2 Pet 1:6 to knowledge self-control, to self-control perseverance, to perseverance godliness,

2 Pet 1:7 to godliness brotherly kindness, and to brotherly kindness love.

2 Pet 1:8 For if these things are yours and abound, you will be neither barren nor unfruitful in the knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Pet 1:9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

2 Pet 1:10 Therefore, brethren, be even more diligent to make your call and election sure, for if you do these things you will never stumble;

2 Pet 1:11 for so an entrance will be supplied to you abundantly into the everlasting kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

2 Pet 1:12 For this reason I will not be negligent to remind you always of these things, though you know and are established in the present truth.

a. Growth in Grace--

2 Pet 3:14 Therefore, beloved, looking forward to these things, be diligent to be found by Him in peace, without spot and blameless;

2 Pet 3:15 and consider that the longsuffering of our Lord is salvation; as also our beloved brother Paul, according to the wisdom given to him, has written to you,

2 Pet 3:16 as also in all his epistles, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which untaught and unstable people twist to their own destruction, as they do also the rest of the Scriptures.

2 Pet 3:17 You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked;

2 Pet 3:18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and forever. Amen.

b. Spiritual Fruit--Gal 5:16-25

c. Perseverance in the faith

John 10:26 But ye believe not, because ye are not of my sheep, as I said unto you.

John 10:27 My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:

John 10:28 And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand.

John 10:29 My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand.

3. Perseverance Is Through the Power of God

1 Pet 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead,

1 Pet 1:4 To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you,

1 Pet 1:5 Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Rom 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

Rom 8:29 For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren.

Rom 8:30 Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called: and whom he called, them he also justified: and whom he justified, them he also glorified.

Rom 8:31 What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us?

Rom 8:32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things?

Rom 8:33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth.

Rom 8:34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us.

Rom 8:35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?

Rom 8:36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter.

Rom 8:37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us.

Rom 8:38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come,

Rom 8:39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.

1 Cor 1:4 I thank my God always on your behalf, for the grace of God which is given you by Jesus Christ;

1 Cor 1:5 That in every thing ye are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge;

1 Cor 1:6 Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you:

1 Cor 1:7 So that ye come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:

1 Cor 1:8 Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ.

1 Cor 1:9 God is faithful, by whom ye were called unto the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord.

4. Assurance is not the same as perseverance

- a. A false professor may have assurance, because he or she has been deceived
- b. A true believer may NOT have assurance, either because of a tender conscience, lack of good teaching, or unresolved sin issues.

5. What do the warnings mean?

- a. Warnings against False "Salvation"

1 John 2:18 Little children, it is the last hour; and as you have heard that the Antichrist is coming, even now many antichrists have come, by which we know that it is the last hour.

1 John 2:19 They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, they would have continued with us; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us.

Jude 1:4 For certain men have crept in unnoticed, who long ago were marked out for this condemnation, ungodly men, who turn the grace of our God into lewdness and deny the only Lord God and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Jude 1:5 But I want to remind you, though you once knew this, that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed those who did not believe.

Jude 1:6 And the angels who did not keep their proper domain, but left their own abode, He has reserved in everlasting chains under darkness for the judgment of the great day;

- b. Chastisement--Heb 12:4-8

- c. Attitude Adjustment--a little humility goes a long way for a believer in Christ.

Chapter 5 Holy Spirit Baptism

One of the key concepts missed by many in the baptism/salvation discussion is a proper understanding of the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. I am not going to address the different views about the baptism with reference to spiritual gifts, tongues, etc., that is a topic for another time. However, the Baptism of the Holy Spirit in general is one of the most important teachings of the New Testament, and it bears heavily on this discussion, because much of the confusion about Biblical references to baptism and salvation arises from people taking verses and passages which speak of Spirit Baptism and applying those passages to water baptism. There are several Biblical facts which we need to examine here:

- The outpouring, or baptism, of the Holy Spirit was predicted in the Old Testament in several places:
- The Baptism in the Holy Spirit was defined by John the Baptizer, the forerunner of Jesus Christ, as being a distinctive part of the ministry of Christ. Indeed, the baptism of water was contrasted with the baptism in the Spirit.
- Christ promised the outpouring, or baptism, of the Spirit to His disciples:
- The initial outpouring came on the day of pentecost, and there were other outpourings in the books of Acts. Some of these outpourings came to those who had been baptized in water, and some came to those who had not yet been baptized in water.
- In discussing the ministry of the Spirit in the Body of Christ (the church) Paul made it plain to the Corinthians that it was Spirit Baptism which placed them in Christ.

1. The outpouring, or baptism, of the Holy Spirit was predicted in the Old Testament in several places:

Isa 44:3 For I will pour water on him who is thirsty, And floods on the dry ground; I will pour My Spirit on your descendants, And My blessing on your offspring;

Joel 2:28 "And it shall come to pass afterward That I will pour out My Spirit on all flesh; Your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, Your old men shall dream dreams, Your young men shall see visions.

Joel 2:29 And also on My menservants and on My maidservants I will pour out My Spirit in those days.

Zec 12:10 "And I will pour on the house of David and on the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and supplication; then they will look on Me whom they pierced. Yes, they will mourn for Him as one mourns for his only son, and grieve for Him as one grieves for a firstborn.

2. The Baptism in the Holy Spirit was defined by John the Baptizer, the forerunner of Jesus Christ, as being a distinctive part of the ministry of Christ. Indeed, the baptism of water was contrasted with the baptism in the Spirit.

Mat 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

Mark 1:8 "I indeed baptized you with water, but He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit."

Luke 3:16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.

John 1:32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.

John 1:33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'

3. Christ promised the outpouring, or baptism, of the Spirit to His disciples:

Luke 24:49 "Behold, I send the Promise of My Father upon you; but tarry in the city of Jerusalem until you are endued with power from on high."

Acts 1:5 "for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now."

4. The initial outpouring came on the day of pentecost, and there were other outpourings in the books of Acts. Some of these outpourings came to those who had been baptized in water, and some came to those who had not yet been baptized in water.

Acts 2:1 When the Day of Pentecost had fully come, they were all with one accord in one place.

Acts 2:2 And suddenly there came a sound from heaven, as of a rushing mighty wind, and it filled the whole house where they were sitting.

Acts 2:3 Then there appeared to them divided tongues, as of fire, and one sat upon each of them.

Acts 2:4 And they were all filled with the Holy Spirit and began to speak with other tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance.

Acts 8:15 who, when they had come down, prayed for them that they might receive the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:16 For as yet He had fallen upon none of them. They had only been baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 8:17 Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit.

Acts 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.

Acts 10:45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.

Acts 10:47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

Acts 11:15 "And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them, as upon us at the beginning.

Acts 11:16 "Then I remembered the word of the Lord, how He said, 'John indeed baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.'

Acts 19:1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples

Acts 19:2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."

Acts 19:3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism."

Acts 19:4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

Acts 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Acts 19:6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied.

5. In discussing the ministry of the Spirit in the Body of Christ (the church) Paul made it plain to the Corinthians that it was Spirit Baptism which placed them in Christ.

1 Cor 12:1 Now concerning spiritual gifts, brethren, I do not want you to be ignorant:

1 Cor 12:2 You know that you were Gentiles, carried away to these dumb idols, however you were led.

1 Cor 12:3 Therefore I make known to you that no one speaking by the Spirit of God calls Jesus accursed, and no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit.

1 Cor 12:4 There are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit.

1 Cor 12:5 There are differences of ministries, but the same Lord.

1 Cor 12:6 And there are diversities of activities, but it is the same God who works all in all.

1 Cor 12:7 But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to each one for the profit of all:

1 Cor 12:8 for to one is given the word of wisdom through the Spirit, to another the word of knowledge through the same Spirit,

1 Cor 12:9 to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healings by the same Spirit,

1 Cor 12:10 to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another discerning of spirits, to another different kinds of tongues, to another the interpretation of tongues.

1 Cor 12:11 But one and the same Spirit works all these things, distributing to each one individually as He wills.

1 Cor 12:12 For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ.

1 Cor 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body; whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

6. Therefore we understand that when baptism is talked about in the Bible, there is a way to distinguish between water baptism and Spirit Baptism in those scriptures which do not specifically tell which type is being discussed. That way is this: if the passage is talking about being placed into Christ, then it is talking about Spirit Baptism, not Water Baptism, for Spirit Baptism is how we are placed into Christ. In the following passage in Romans 6, for example, it is obvious that the context is being placed into Christ and the passage dwells on the believer's identification with Christ, with His death, and with His resurrection. In this passage, the believer is not baptized into WATER, but into the death of Christ.

Rom 6:1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound?

Rom 6:2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

Rom 6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

Rom 6:4 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.

a. The next verse is often thought to refer to water baptism--

Rom 6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

b. The common interpretation of those who teach that water baptism is found in this verse is this:

"...we have been united together in the likeness of His death..."

This phrase is taken by them to mean burial, or immersion in water. I marvel that anyone really thinks that is true--for Christ's death happened NOT in the tomb, when He was buried, but His death took place ON THE CROSS! Water Baptism bears no resemblance whatsoever to His death! The likeness of His death is when we realize that our old man has been crucified with Him, and that sin therefore has no dominion over us--which is the subject of this entire chapter! (See verses 1 and 2 again). The likeness of His death is when we recognize and account ourselves as dead and live only for Christ.

Rom 6:6 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.

Rom 6:7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

Rom 6:8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him,

Rom 6:9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him.

This, of course, accords with what Paul also says in Galatians--

Gal 2:20 "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.

7. The following verses also refer to Spirit Baptism.

Col 2:9 For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily;

Col 2:10 and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power.

Col 2:11 In Him you were also circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, by putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ,

Col 2:12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

(I defy anyone to demonstrate how to baptize in water “without hands...”)

Col 2:13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

Titus 3:5 not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to His mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit,

Titus 3:6 whom He poured out on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior,

It is not water that is used in this baptism, it is the Spirit who is poured out and washes us in regenerating power.

1 Pet 3:18 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,

1 Pet 3:19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison,

1 Pet 3:20 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.

1 Pet 3:21 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,

Water Baptism The Form and Practice of The Early Church

We have looked at the nature of salvation as being by God’s Grace alone through faith in Christ alone. We have shown that salvation is therefore eternal because of its very nature, and we have briefly examined the concept of Holy Spirit Baptism, which was in integral result of Christ’s mission on earth. We have learned how to distinguish between the two types of Baptism in scripture. Having done that, we can examine the concept of Water Baptism, and its place in the outer ceremonial life of the church. Christ gave the church two ceremonies, The Lord’s Supper and Baptism, and they are very similar in purpose and meaning. Therefore, in order to fully understand the concept of Water Baptism, we must first look at the Supper.

1. The Lord’s Supper

a. There are references to the events of the first Lord’s Supper in each of the gospels. If you look at the following verses, you will be able to piece together the whole narrative of that meal and its surrounding events.

Mat 26:17-30

Mark 14:22-24

Luke 22:19-20

John 13--whole chapter

b. And the following allusions to the Supper help us see some things about it.

Acts 2:42 And they continued steadfastly in the apostles’ doctrine and fellowship, in the breaking of bread, and in prayers.

Acts 2:46 So continuing daily with one accord in the temple, and breaking bread from house to house, they ate their food with gladness and simplicity of heart,

Acts 2:47 praising God and having favor with all the people. And the Lord added to the church daily those who were being saved.

Acts 20:7 Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.

1 Cor 10:16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

1 Cor 10:17 For we, though many, are one bread and one body; for we all partake of that one bread.

1 Cor 10:21 You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.

c. However, the "ought" passage which most fully explains the Lord's Supper is in 1 Cor 11.

1 Cor 11:17 Now in giving these instructions I do not praise you, since you come together not for the better but for the worse.

1 Cor 11:18 For first of all, when you come together as a church, I hear that there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

1 Cor 11:19 For there must also be factions among you, that those who are approved may be recognized among you.

1 Cor 11:20 Therefore when you come together in one place, it is not to eat the Lord's Supper.

1 Cor 11:21 For in eating, each one takes his own supper ahead of others; and one is hungry and another is drunk.

1 Cor 11:22 What! Do you not have houses to eat and drink in? Or do you despise the church of God and shame those who have nothing? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you in this? I do not praise you.

1 Cor 11:23 For I received from the Lord that which I also delivered to you: that the Lord Jesus on the same night in which He was betrayed took bread;

1 Cor 11:24 and when He had given thanks, He broke it and said, "Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you; do this in remembrance of Me."

1 Cor 11:25 In the same manner He also took the cup after supper, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in My blood. This do, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of Me."

1 Cor 11:26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death till He comes.

1 Cor 11:27 Therefore whoever eats this bread or drinks this cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

1 Cor 11:28 But let a man examine himself, and so let him eat of the bread and drink of the cup.

1 Cor 11:29 For he who eats and drinks in an unworthy manner eats and drinks judgment to himself, not discerning the Lord's body.

1 Cor 11:30 For this reason many are weak and sick among you, and many sleep.

1 Cor 11:31 For if we would judge ourselves, we would not be judged.

1 Cor 11:32 But when we are judged, we are chastened by the Lord, that we may not be condemned with the world.

1 Cor 11:33 Therefore, my brethren, when you come together to eat, wait for one another.

1 Cor 11:34 But if anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And the rest I will set in order when I come.

d. From these verses we learn many things, but as to the meaning, power, and significance of the Supper, we see the following:

(1) It is a memorial--it is done in memory of the Sacrifice of Christ on the Cross--11:24-25

(2) It is a proclamation of the Cross--11:26

(3) There is no mystical power or grace conferred in the ceremony of the Supper--it is a memorial and a proclamation. It is significant in the life of the church, and it is to be celebrated, because Christ commanded so, but it confers no piece nor part of salvation.

2. Water Baptism--

If we want to know what our *practice* as a church should be, we need only to look at the command given by Christ and at the practice followed by the first churches.

a. The disciples of Jesus practiced water baptism during Christ's earthly ministry.

John 3:22 After these things Jesus and His disciples came into the land of Judea, and there He remained with them and baptized.

John 4:1 Therefore, when the Lord knew that the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John

John 4:2 (though Jesus Himself did not baptize, but His disciples),

b. Christ Commanded that the church baptize new converts

Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

c. The normal practice of the church was to baptize new converts immediately, or as soon as possible.

Acts 2:41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

Acts 8:12 But when they believed Philip as he preached the things concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, both men and women were baptized.

Acts 8:13 Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done.

Acts 8:36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, "See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?"

Acts 8:37 Then Philip said, "If you believe with all your heart, you may." And he answered and said, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."

Acts 8:38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

Acts 9:18 Immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he received his sight at once; and he arose and was baptized.

Acts 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,

Acts 10:47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"

Acts 10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

Acts 16:14 Now a certain woman named Lydia heard us. She was a seller of purple from the city of Thyatira, who worshiped God. The Lord opened her heart to heed the things spoken by Paul.

Acts 16:15 And when she and her household were baptized, she begged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." So she persuaded us.

Acts 16:33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.

Acts 18:8 Then Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his household. And many of the Corinthians, hearing, believed and were baptized.

Acts 18:25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John.

Acts 19:4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."

Acts 19:5 When they heard this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

3. The controversial verses and their meanings. So far, we have learned the following things about the controversy surrounding salvation and baptism:

- a. Salvation is by Grace alone Through Faith alone, not in any measure by human works.
- b. Holy Spirit Baptism is the subject of many of the verses in the Bible which refer to Baptism, particularly those verses which refer to being placed into Christ, or into the body of Christ (the church).
- c. There is a simple way to distinguish which baptism is being discussed in a verse.
- d. The other ordinance, or ceremony, which Christ gave the church, the Supper, is a memorial which demonstrates or proclaims a reality which is separate from the ceremony itself.
- e. Water Baptism is to be practiced by the church as a ceremony commanded by Christ and exemplified by the early church.
- f. This leaves us with a few verses harder to understand, which are alleged by some people to overthrow the clear teachings of the many verses we have already given you. It is not easy to determine the exact meaning of these verses, but based on the MANY verses given above, it is easy to say what they do not mean.

Because human works cannot contribute one iota to salvation, these verses cannot mean that the ceremony of Baptism has any saving power. Manifestly, the clear message of the dozens of scriptures given above cannot be twisted by the few harder to understand verses given below.

Mark 16:16 "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

The proper understanding of this verse, in the light of the many clear verses which teach the nature of salvation is:

- a. The normal evidence of a changed heart is obedience, and will normally be first evidenced by following the Lord in water baptism.
- b. Someone who does not believe is lost--of course, this is well known by believers.
- c. The Scripture above does NOT say that anyone skipping baptism would be lost--which Mark could easily have said, had the Holy Spirit so desired.

Acts 2:38 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.

Peter is not here giving a detailed explanation of the way of salvation--he gives the convicted hearers a set of valid instructions--remember, this was the first mass evangelism of the New Testament era, and Peter was setting the pattern--confession of Christ and salvation, followed by the first act of obedience, Water Baptism.

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

Again, Paul is not here giving a theological dissertation--he is telling the gathered assembly of great people what transpired during the beginning of his Christian life. He is quoting Ananias, the messenger sent to him. Indeed, Paul *figuratively* washed his sins away in water baptism, just as do all believers, but there is not evidence of any deeper meaning here. If, indeed, water baptism was so vital, Paul would no doubt have included it in his discussions of salvation in Romans and Ephesians--he did not do so.

Indeed, it might behoove those who think there is saving power in baptism to consider the verses below.

1 Cor 1:13 Is Christ divided? Was Paul crucified for you? Or were you baptized in the name of Paul?

1 Cor 1:14I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,

1 Cor 1:15lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.

1 Cor 1:16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.

1 Cor 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

Paul baptized only a few of the Corinthians--yet he plainly declares that he was the spiritual father of all of them.

1 Cor 4:14 I do not write these things to shame you, but as my beloved children I warn you.

1 Cor 4:15 For though you might have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet you do not have many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel.

To the Reader

I urge you to evaluate this paper on the merits of the Scriptures I have given you, and not on tradition or on the teachings of men. I have given you a lot of scripture, all in context--evaluate what the Bible says, not what men want it to say. Also, do not be intimidated by men or their opinions.

There is no doubt in my mind, that salvation is by Grace alone through faith in Christ alone, and that Water Baptism is a sign and declaration of that relationship with Christ and is a first step of obedience in the Christian life. Being baptized in water does not add one iota to your salvation, and missing baptism in water for a valid reason will not detract from your salvation. However, if someone is willful and will not be water baptized in spite of understanding the scriptural instruction to do so, then that person is giving evidence of a heart still bound by sin--in all probability, such a person was never a believer. However, if someone thinks that an act of a human being, be it water baptism or any other act, contributes in any way to salvation, that person is stealing the glory and honor which go to God alone, and is destroying grace--if you think a work contributed to your salvation, you need to examine yourself to see whether or not you are indeed saved.

Soli Deo Gloria--To God Alone Be the Glory

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