

# A Closer Look at Baptism, Salvation 101

I Peter 3:20-21

## Introduction

1. One of the most hotly contested religious questions centers on whether or not baptism is **for** the remission of sins.
2. Let us pose some questions that should be answered before we can conclude that baptism doesn't have anything to do with remission of sins, but only serves as a public testimony of a previous salvation experience by faith alone.

## I. If Baptism Isn't For Remission Of Sins...

- A. Why did Simon Peter answer those looking to be forgiven by telling them "... repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ **for** the forgiveness of your sins..." (Acts 2:36-38)? How many would be comfortable giving this answer today?
- B. Why did the Eunuch request baptism after having Jesus preached to him, even though he was on a lonely road? Why did he rejoice after baptism rather than after belief? (Acts 8:35-39)?
- C. Why was the jailer "immediately" baptized at midnight with only his family present (Acts 16:32-33)?
- D. Why do we never find baptism *deliberately* delayed by the church in the New Testament as it often is today?
- E. Why was the repentant, believer Paul, the only case of delayed baptism in the Bible, told "Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sin calling on His name" (Acts 22:16).
- F. Why were the Roman Christians asked to recall their baptism as the time when they had been raised to "... walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:3-4)?
- G. Why were those in the churches of Galatia told that they were sons of God through faith, "For as many of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ" (Gal. 3:26-27)?
- H. Why, when baptism and salvation are both mentioned in a Bible verse, is baptism never put after salvation, but always before?
- I. Why is a "washing" or "water" often associated with salvation (Acts 22:16; Eph. 5:26; Titus 3:5; Jn. 3:5; I Pet. 3:20-21; I Cor. 6:11; cf. Acts 8:36)?
- J. Why does Peter say "...baptism now saves you..." (I Pet. 3:21)??
- K. Why do almost all conversions in Acts mention baptism while many of those accounts do not even mention belief?
- L. Why does the Bible say that we are saved "... not by faith alone" (Jas. 2:24).
- M. Why did Jesus say, "He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved..." (Mk. 16:16).
- N. We are baptized "into" Christ (Gal. 3:27).

## II. The Evidence Is Not Easily Dismissed.

- A. Baptism is linked to salvation, forgiveness, newness of life, new birth, washing away sins, becoming a Christian, being clothed with Christ, being sons of God, being saved, being sanctified, regenerated, etc..
- B. Baptism is never deliberately postponed.
- C. People are baptized in isolated circumstances and at unusual times.
- D. Belief alone is said not to save, while baptism is said to save in association with Jesus' resurrection.
- E. Baptism is associated with entering "into" Christ.

### **Conclusion**

1. Baptism cannot earn salvation, nothing can do that, Christ alone paid the price for the gift of God's grace.
2. The complete picture of responsive faith includes the preaching of the Gospel, belief, repentance, confession, baptism, but most importantly the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus.
3. Even as Naaman was not healed by water (II Kgs. 15:14), but by the power of God, baptism itself does not and cannot save.
4. Don't delay, "Arise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on His name."