

**Q&A #8 | *Baptism and Salvation***  
June 21, 2011

**Question:** Is baptism a necessity to my salvation?

---

**Answer:** No, baptism is not necessary to your salvation.

Biblical Reasons for Baptism Not Being Necessary to Salvation:

**1- If Baptism Was Necessary Then We Would Find it Wherever the Gospel Was Preached, but we Don't.**

- a. Peter's Sermon in Solomon's Portico (Acts 3:12-26) Does not Mention Baptism. He makes no reference to baptism.
- b. Paul never spoke of baptism in his gospel presentations.
  - i. **1 Corinthians 15:1-4:** Now, brothers, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures,
  - ii. **1 Corinthians 1:17:** For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel—not with words of human wisdom, lest the cross of Christ be emptied of its power.

**2- There are people saved without having ben baptized.**

- a. The penitent woman (Luke 7:37-50)
- b. The paralytic man (Matthew 9:2)
- c. The Tax Collector (Luke 18:13-14)
- d. The thief on the cross (Luke 23:40-43).
- e. Cornelius was saved prior to being baptized (Acts 10:44-48)

**3- Passages Used to Say Baptism is Necessary**

- a. **Mark 16:16:** Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.
  - i. Notice the key word that brings condemnation is not baptism, but believing.
  - ii. Condemnation, according to this passage, comes from not believing.
- b. **Acts 2:38:** Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

- i. ESV Study Note on Act 2:38: The gospel can be summarized in different ways. Sometimes faith alone is named as the one thing necessary for salvation (see John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9; Eph. 2:8–9), other times repentance alone is named (Luke 24:47; Acts 3:19; 5:31; 17:30; 2 Cor. 7:10), and sometimes both are named (Acts 20:21). Genuine faith always involves repentance, and vice versa. Repentance includes a change of mind that ends up trusting God (i.e., having faith).
- c. **1 Peter 3:21:** this water symbolizes baptism that now saves you also—not the removal of dirt from the body but the pledge of a good conscience toward God. It saves you by the resurrection of Jesus Christ, who has gone into heaven and is at God’s right hand—with angels, authorities and powers in submission to him...
  - i. Notice what saves you in this passage, “not the removal of dirt from the body, but the pledge of a good conscience toward God.”
  - ii. Baptism doesn’t save you, but baptism is “the pledge (or “a response”) of a good conscience toward God”
  - iii. Baptism, according to 1 Peter 3:21 is an acted out symbol of one’s repentance and faith in Jesus.

**4- Salvation is by grace alone in Christ alone obtained through faith alone to the Glory of God alone.**

- a. **We Find Out About Salvation from Scripture Alone:** Our only source of pure truth is the Bible. So when asking this question about baptism we must go to the Bible alone, or be shown from Scripture alone, about the question of baptism.
- b. **Salvation is earned for Christians by grace alone:** Ephesians 2:5 says, “it is by grace you have been saved.” Grace is God’s undeserved gift given to men who only deserve judgment. Grace cannot be earned, it cannot be merited and it cannot be demanded by word or action. Salvation is God’s gift to undeserving man. It cannot be earned by baptism, or any other work.
- c. **Grace is Given through Christ alone:** Ephesians 2:4-5 says, “But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, *made us alive with Christ* even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.” Jesus’ death on the cross is the sole cause of our salvation. We cannot add anything to the full and completed salvation Jesus has given us. He purchased our salvation in full at the cross and nothing can be added, including the act of baptism.
- d. **We Obtain God’s Grace Through Jesus Through Faith Alone:** So Jesus has completely worked for our salvation, but how do we obtain His completed work and make it apply to us? Is baptism a necessary action that is to be done to obtain Jesus’ full salvation? No. **We obtain this grace in Jesus through faith alone.** Ephesians 2:8-9 says, “For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from

yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.” We are saved by grace alone in Christ alone and we obtain that grace through faith alone. Paul makes sure we know that no works can obtain the salvation of Jesus by saying, “this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast.” Faith is the arm that reaches out and grabs hold of Jesus’ salvation. It is trust in the Person and Work of Jesus alone for one’s salvation.

- e. **We Are Saved for God’s Glory Alone:** This is a free-bee, but God saving us in Christ is not done ultimately for us, but for Him. God has worked salvation for sinners in Christ for His glory. Ephesians 1 says that God has chosen us, redeemed us in Jesus and sealed us in the Spirit, “for the praise of His glory” (Ephesians 1:6,12, 14). Our salvation in Jesus is about God’s glory and Christians would have it no other way.

- 5- Jesus alone saves us through faith alone. We are saved by the sacrifice of the body of Jesus Christ once for all; we are saved by Jesus’ work and we can add nothing to it. We obtain the work of Christ through faith alone. Faith is the arm by which believers grab hold of the salvation Jesus gives. Baptism neither *works for* our salvation nor does it *obtain* our salvation.