

Rom. 14:19

So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another.

THE LENEXA EDIFIER

John 8:32 and ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free.

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7 REASONS WE MUST BE BAPTIZED

Jim Stauffer

One of the most divisive subjects in religion is baptism. I must admit to a failure to understand why. Is there anything taught in Scripture more explicitly? In this brief article we will show passages of Scripture that clearly express 7 different reasons for or benefits of baptism. Every one of the 7 reasons are necessary for a person to *lay hold on that for which also I was laid hold on by Christ Jesus*. Eternal life in heaven is in the balance.

- 1) When the apostles were given what most describe as The Great Commission, they were told to *make disciples of all nations, baptizing them into the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit (Mat. 28:19,20)*. If we desire to be disciples, yes, followers of Christ, baptism is essential. He said so.
- 2) On this same occasion Jesus also stated the positive response to the preaching of the apostles would be baptism. *He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that disbelieveth shall be condemned (Mk. 16:16)*. The same message was delivered to the Philippian jailer when he inquired of what he must do to be saved (**Acts 16:30-33**). He did not equivocate. He was baptized in the same hour.
- 3) When the people who had called for the crucifixion of Jesus heard Peter call them to account for killing the Messiah, they asked, *Brethren, what shall we do?* Peter instructed them to *Repent and be baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38)*. Baptism is essential for the remission of sins. Our hearts must be turned to God in repentance but our actions must verify that by obeying His command to be baptized.
- 4) An immediate effect of baptism for the remission of sins was to be added to the church. Therefore, we conclude to be added to the Lord's church demands we *gladly receive the word* by being baptized (**vs 41**). Subsequent to

that obedient response to the gospel, they were added to the church (**vs 47**).

- 5) Being baptized is what believers do in response to the gospel. **Acts 8:12** *But when they believed Philip preaching good tidings concerning the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women*. Both men and women responded to the specific teaching of the word by being baptized. The very same response occurred when Philip met the Ethiopian on the road (**Acts 8:35-38**). We are told Philip *preached unto him Jesus*. When they came to a body of water the eunuch said, *Behold, here is water, what doth hinder me to be baptized?* Philip then tells him he can if he believes with all his heart that Jesus is the Son of God. **Verse 38** then says, *And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they both went down into the water, both Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him*. There is no denying the propriety and necessity of baptism to spiritual conversion as taught in the Bible.
- 6) What person who believes in the message of Christ; that faith Jude exhorts us to contend earnestly for, would reject putting on Christ in baptism. **Gal. 3:26** *For ye are all sons of God, through faith, in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ did put on Christ*.
- 7) Paul teaches the Roman Christians baptism was into the death of Christ so we could put to death the man of sin and rise to *walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:3,4)*.

Now I know of no one who rejects being a disciple of Christ, declines salvation, wishes not to receive the remission of sins, does not wish to be added to the Lord's church, rejects the gospel of Christ, rejects the concept of putting on Christ and does not want to walk in newness of life.

Yet, many do so effectively by rejecting baptism.

Consider Me Irrelevant

Mike Thomas

Rob Bell, former pastor of a megachurch, said in an interview with Oprah Winfrey that any church that does not endorse same-sex marriages will become irrelevant. Regarding accepting homosexuality in spite of the Bible, he says, "I think culture is already there and the church will continue to be even more irrelevant when it quotes letters from 2,000 years ago as their best defense" (The Huffington Post, 2/20/15).

Our nation is gradually adopting Bell's reasoning. More and more "Christians" are rushing to the defense of homosexuality and learning to *"approve of those who practice"* it (**Romans 1:32**). The current tactic of the devil is to convince people to view it in the same light as the racial injustice of the past. "It was wrong to reject a black man for his skin color and it is wrong to reject a homosexual for marrying someone he loves."

We all can see that racism is a sin (**Acts 10:34-35**). But by duping us into thinking we are just as unloving for opposing sexual perversion, the devil has tricked us into defending error. And now that "Christian pastors" are telling us churches are irrelevant if we do not endorse same-sex marriage, and the Bible is outdated in condemning it, we are that much closer to what God said of Sodom and Gomorrah before He destroyed them: *"their sin is very grave"* (Genesis 18:20).

Believe what you want, dear friends, but I choose to act like Lot when he lived in Sodom – he *"was oppressed by the filthy conduct of the wicked...from day to day by seeing and hearing their lawless deeds"* (**2 Peter 2:7-8**). He did not let the world convince him to redefine God's will on this matter, and hopefully, neither will I. The Bible says it is a sin for a church to endorse any sin, especially that of a sexual nature (**1 Corinthians 5**). The only way God forgives homosexuality is when it is repented of and removed by the blood of Christ (**1 Corinthians 6:9-10; Acts 18:8**). The church I attend might become fewer in number for upholding these antiquated principles, but the truth of God's will has never been determined by the number of people who deem it relevant (**Genesis 19:14; Matthew 7:13-14**). ~via *Standing Firm; Beaver Dam, Kentucky; Taken from the Market Street Messenger, Athens, Al.*

God Is and God Cares

Earl Kimbrough

Without faith it is impossible to please him for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that

He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him (Heb. 11:6).

The heavens declare the glory of God and the firmament shows his handiwork, but the Bible alone reveals God's nature and character. It declares him to be infinite and eternal, without beginning or end. He is shown to be the ultimate source of all things, the Creator and Sustainer of the universe and all that exists therein. The text proclaims three crucial facts about God and our relation to Him.

1. God Is. He really exists! There is a God, the Supreme Being, the supreme reality. His existence is subject to intelligent faith (**Romans 1:19**). The evidence for God's existence is so abundant that people are without excuse in denying Him (**Psalms 19:1-4**). It is the fool that says in his heart there is no God (**Psalms 14:1**). God not only exists now, but he has always existed and will continue to exist forever (**Isaiah 57:15**).

2. God Cares. He cares for his creatures and He blesses them in accord with their response to him. His role as a renderer of rewards is demonstrated from the beginning. By faith Enoch walked with God and God took him away to eternal blessing. Noah by faith found favor with him to the saving of his family and Abraham was rewarded with divine blessings for himself and his children, both physical and spiritual. The rewards that God bestows on the faithful are both temporal and eternal. One who does not believe that God is a rewarder has no basis to walk with him daily, to pray to him continually, and to worship him regularly.

3. Man's Active Faith Is Essential. One cannot please God without active faith in Him and His perfect goodness. Apart from living faith, one cannot properly do what God requires in seeking Him (**Matthew 6:33; 7:7,21; James 2:14-26**). Where faith is lacking, there is no incentive to seek God. The fountain of all service to him is a firm belief that He is and that He genuinely cares. He is a loving rewarder of all who earnestly seek him. Isaiah encouraged ancient Israel to: *"Seek the Lord while He may be found, Call upon him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return to the Lord, And he will have mercy on him; and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon"* (**Isaiah 55:6**).

David no doubt had the truth that God is and God cares in mind when he counseled Solomon concerning the Lord, saying: *"If you seek Him, He will be found by you, but if you forsake Him He will cast you off forever"* (**2 Chronicles 28:9**).

~via *Biblical E-Sights;; Vol. 3 No. 5.*

Imitating Jesus' Emotions

A common doctrine promoted by false teachers is the reliance on emotions for determining God's will. Some believe that if our prayers, worship, or lifestyle "feels like what God wants" we must be drawing near to Him. This belief is not based in Scripture. Feelings vary from person to person, and thus establishing God's will by what "feels right" creates division. Such division is condemned by God (**1 Cor. 1:10-13**). Forming beliefs based upon our feelings undermines the sufficiency of the Scriptures (**2 Tim. 3:16-17**).

This isn't to say feelings are not important though. The Bible teaches the right emotions to direct toward the right things.

Consider the example of Jesus. There were times Jesus' actions seem to indicate much less emotion than the "average" person, and there were times Jesus' actions seem to indicate much more emotion than the "average" person.

In **Mark 15**, while the Jews were falsely accusing Jesus, Pilate asked Him, *"Do you answer nothing? See how many things they testify against you!"* (verse 4). *"But Jesus still answered nothing, so that Pilate marveled"* (verse 5). Instead of being angry and defensive toward the Jews, Jesus was quiet.

Contrast this with a situation in **John 2:14-16**. Jesus found in the temple *"those who sold oxen and sheep and doves, and the money changers doing business. When He had made a whip of cords, He drove them all out of the temple, with the sheep and the oxen, and poured out the changers' money and overturned the tables. And He said to those who sold doves, 'Take these things away! Do not make my Father's house a house of merchandise!'"* While others were apathetic toward error, Jesus was on fire over it.

Jesus' contrast of emotions is grounded in His understanding that some things are worth being emotional about while others are not.

Jesus cared so deeply about Jerusalem's disobedience and consequent punishment that He wept over the city (**Luke 19:41**). He cared so much for Lazarus that He wept when he found Lazarus dead (**John 11:35**). His closeness with God and heartfelt prayer led Him to weep as He was praying (**Hebrews 5:7**).

Jesus was moved with compassion toward those in need (**Matthew 9:36; 20:34; Mark 1:40-41; 8:2; Luke 7:13**). He was *"troubled in spirit"* when foretelling Judas' betrayal (**John 13:21**). He was *"exceeding sorrowful"* before dying for the sins of the world (**Matthew 26:38**).

Jesus felt joy (**Luke 10:21**), love (**John 11:3**), gladness (**John 11:15**), and peace (**John 14:27**). He was far from emotionless, but His emotion was not

directed at the things most people direct emotion towards.

In **Luke 10**, Martha sought to serve Jesus' temporal needs while her sister Mary sat at Jesus' feet. When Martha urged for Mary's help, Jesus said to her, *"Martha, Martha, you are worried and troubled about many things. But one thing is needed, and Mary has chosen that good part, which will not be taken away from her"* (verses 41-42). Martha was emotional over temporal things, while Jesus focused on eternity.

In **Esther 3**, Mordecai failed to show Haman excessive honor, and Haman felt so much pride and anger that he determined to kill every Jew in the Medo-Persian Empire (**Esther 3:2-6**). Many, like Mordecai, become emotional over selfish matters, but Jesus never did.

Following Jesus' lead means being *"swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath"* (**James 1:19**), but it also involves rejoicing with those who rejoice and weeping with those who weep (**Romans 12:15**). It leads to singing and praying with the spirit and understanding (**1 Corinthians 14:15**), which infers feeling emotions over the words sung and prayed.

Imitating Jesus' emotions begins by understanding what is important and prioritizing accordingly.

We must, like Jesus, focus on serving God and others. We must, like Jesus, focus on eternal things rather than temporal things. In so doing, we can imitate His words, thoughts, and actions, and also His emotions.

Michael Hickox,
The Sincere Milk of God's Word

Some Quotes Worth Pondering . . .

"Never stop doing your best just because someone doesn't give you credit."

"It doesn't take strength to hold a grudge; it takes strength to let go of one."

"People who say it cannot be done should not interrupt those who are doing it."

"Though no one can go back and make a brand new start, anyone can start now and make a brand new ending."

"It's hard to beat a person who never gives up."

"A second chance doesn't mean anything if you haven't learned from your first mistake."

***Taken from The Beacon Electronic Bulletin,
Collegaveue Church of Christ, Columbia, Tn.***

Eph. 2:19 So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God, 20 being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone; 21 in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

1Pet. 2:9 But ye are an elect race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession, that ye may show forth the excellencies of him who called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:

Psa. 1:1 Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the wicked, Nor standeth in the way of sinners, Nor sitteth in the seat of scoffers: 2 But his delight is in the law of Jehovah; And on his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the streams of water, That bringeth forth its fruit in its season, Whose leaf also doth not wither; And whatsoever he doeth shall prosper. 4 The wicked are not so, But are like the chaff which the wind driveth away. 5 Therefore the wicked shall not stand in the judgment, Nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous. 6 For Jehovah knoweth the way of the righteous; But the way of the wicked shall perish.

HOURS OF WORSHIP

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Sunday A.M. 10:20 Assembled Worship

Sunday P.M. 5:00 Assembled Worship

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NEWS AND NOTES:

PLEASE REMEMBER THE FOLLOWING IN YOUR PRAYERS: J.R. DANIEL, GRANT CLOTHIER, JAN PATRICK AND STEVE WIMP AND LILA, THE SISTER OF ALMA BAUMGARTNER.

MARY CZIRR IS UNDER HOSPICE CARE.

DERRICK GAINES, THE SON OF JAN PATRICK IS RECUPERATING FROM TRANSPLANT SURGERY AS IS THE SISTER OF WENDY TAYLOR.

OUR CURRENT STUDIES ARE: SUNDAY MORNING: THE BOOK OF ACTS - BYRON TAYLOR AND WEDNESDAY EVENING: THE SCHEME OF REDEMPTION - JIM STAUFFER

SUNDAY MORNING SERMON: WHO WILL ENTER THE KINGDOM OF HEAVEN?



What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear the gospel - Romans 10:17

Believe in Jesus Christ - Hebrews 11:6

Repent of sins - Acts 17:30

Confess Christ as Lord - Romans 10:9,10

Be Baptized for remission of sins - Acts 2:38

Be Faithful unto death - Revelation 2:10