



The Voice Of Truth

A weekly publication of the

Hillcrest church of Christ

1621 Hillcrest Drive
Green Bay, WI 54313
(920) 499-5677

www.hillcrestchurchofchrist.com

February 26th, 2006

After Baptism – What Then?

By Jimmy Pettigrew

The Word of God tells us that there is one baptism (Ephesians 4:5), and this baptism is for all lost men (Mark 16:16). The design of baptism into Christ is for remission of sins, to obtain salvation (Acts 2:38; 22:16). Baptism changes ones state and relationship with God. One is out of Christ until he/she is baptized into Christ (Romans 6:3-4; Galatians 3:26-27). Salvation is to be found only in Christ (2 Timothy 2:10); along with all spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3). Thus, one cannot have salvation or any other spiritual blessings out of Christ before being baptized into Christ!

Therefore, after baptism - what then? Baptism does not guarantee eternal life! Even after one is baptized into Christ, he/she can so sin as to be lost; and Paul told some: "Christ is become of no effect unto you, whosoever of you are justified by the law: ye are fallen from grace" (Galatians 5:4). They had fallen from grace! He had declared, earlier, that these had been called into the grace of Christ by the Gospel (Galatians 1:16). Here Paul plainly declared what so many in the religious world state cannot be done: They had fallen from grace! Baptism did not guarantee their eternal salvation (Galatians 3:26-27)!

Baptism does not guarantee eternal life; what then, after baptism? Let us make a list. After baptism you MUST:

- (1) Put the kingdom (the church) first (Matthew 6:33). Put God before pleasure, loved ones, company, work, etc. Like Paul, count all things loss for Christ (Philippians 3:7-8).
- (2) All of life is devoted to Christ (Galatians 2:20). We are

to be living sacrifices for Christ (Romans 12:1-2). "For to me to live is Christ" (Philippians 1:21).

- (3) You must worship God every Lord's day (Acts 20:7; Hebrew 10:25). Where else would a Christian want to be?

- (4) You must live with care. Satan exists to make war with the saints of God (Revelation 13:7). Peter thus warned: "Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour" (1 Peter 5:8).

- (5) Cease to practice sinful or doubtful things. Live as a new creature (2 Corinthians 5:17). The one who is baptized into Christ is raised up to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4). "Be not deceived; evil communications corrupt good manners" (1 Corinthians 15:33). "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (1 Thessalonians 5:22).

- (6) Set your affection on things above. Don't put your trust in things of the world, for all will be burned up (2 Peter 3:10). "If then ye were raised together with Christ, seek the things that are above, where Christ is, seated on the right hand of God. Set your mind on the things that are above, not on the things that are upon the earth. For ye died, and your life is hid with Christ in God" (Colossians 3:1-3).

- (7) Keep in touch with God. We must permit God to speak to us daily through the study of His Word (Acts 17:11; 2 Timothy 2:15). Never quit growing spiritually.

- (8) Be doers of the Word (James 1:22). Show faith by works (James 2).

(9) We must be more concerned about obedience than sacrifice. To obey is better than sacrifice (1 Samuel 15:22).

(10) We must add to our faith (2 Peter 1:5-8). "For he that lacketh these things is blind, ... but, If ye do these things, ye shall never stumble" (2 Peter 1:9-10).

Brethren, "Only let your manner of life be worthy of the gospel of Christ ..." (Philippians 1:27). We must live the gospel to be ready for eternity. If you want to convince others of the value of Christianity – live it!

Who Are God's Children?

Jimmy Pettigrew

Are all people in the world God's children? Are those who are disobedient to God, are they God's children, or just those who are obedient to Him? What does the scriptures say concerning these questions?

There is a sense in which Jehovah is the Father of all men. We are to "be in subjection to the Father of spirits" (Hebrews 12:9). There is one Father (Ephesians 4:6) of all human spirits, at death the human "spirit returneth unto God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7). Since God is the Father and giver of all human spirits, the spirit, at birth, is pure and holy. God cannot father, or give, that which is less than good. At birth, babies are without sin and in their purity altogether acceptable to God. God is their Father, they are His children. The Son of God recognized the purity and innocence of such in saying, "Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew 18:3). But Jesus called them unto him, saying, Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for to such belongeth the kingdom of God" (Luke 18:16).

However, when the child is mature, sin enters, and separation from God occurs. "Your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, so that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:2). The mature person makes the conscious decision to do the wrong and leave undone the right (Romans 6:16). The sinful adult is no longer a child of God. He lost his sonship when he elected to sin. A person is either a child of God or he is a child of the devil. There is no middle ground (Matthew 6:24).

A good many people today seem to have trouble identifying the difference between a child of God and

a child of Satan. John had no such problem and neither did any other New Testament writer. "Whosoever is begotten of God doeth no sin, because his seed abideth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is begotten of God. In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God" (1 John 3:9-10). The habitual sinner - the one who makes sin the rule of his life - is of the devil. Such a person is already at home in Satan! The habitual sinner is like the devil and hence is considered his son, his offspring. Thus, not all people are God's children, but only those who obey Him.

There is something for man to do. The believer who shall not perish, but have eternal life is the person who "doeth the truth" (John 3:21). To do truth is to love truth, follow truth, and obey truth! These are the children of God. God abides in saints (not sinners) as they love, obey, worship, and walk in the light (1 John 1:7). Since God is in heaven (Acts 7:55-56), He does not abide in Christians in a bodily way. God abides in those who keep His commandments (1 John 3:23-24). Jesus had promised that God would abide in obedient people (John 14:23-24). God demanded that Christ be the Savior of those who obey Him (Hebrews 5:9). In order to have the Father and the Son, we MUST abide in the doctrine or teaching of Christ (2 John 9). We must do their will as set forth in the New Testament. This simply means we don't have the Father or Christ if we are not obedient to His will. Therefore, to be a child of God, to have God as Father, one must obey the commandments of the Lord (1 Corinthians 14:37; Hebrews 1:1-2; Matthew 7:21-23).

The Bible tells us, "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God" (Romans 8:14). The gospel is God's power to save; the gospel was revealed by the Spirit. The good news, the gospel, leads people to become children of God. When we follow the gospel (Romans 1:16) we are the sons of God. A child of God is a Christian, one who has been born of water and of the Spirit (John 3:5). Sons of Satan are minus the new birth. Sons of God are obedient to the faith (Acts 6:7). Sons of Satan are not. Sons of God have been translated into the kingdom of the Son (Colossians 1:13). Sons of Satan have not experienced such deliverance.

Not all people are God's children. One must abide in God (1 John 4:13). One must be in the family (household) of God (Ephesians 2:19-22). To be in God's family is to be in His church (1 Timothy 3:15). People who believe, repent, and confess Christ can be baptized into the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 12:13). The only way a person can truly come to know the Father is to have been forgiven of their sins. This is a child of God!