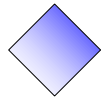


The Voice of Truth



January 27, 2013

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 obedient 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! ♦

Don't think you can ignore the Lord in this life and He will give you a crown in the Life to come.

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“Obligations I Have To God”

By Jarrod Jacobs

The word “obligation” is defined as: “something by which a person is bound to do certain things, and which arises out of a sense of duty or results from custom, law, etc. a binding promise, contract, sense of duty, etc.” (Webster’s Encyclopedic Unabridged Dictionary of the English Language). I believe there are relatively few people today who realize that they actually have certain obligations toward God. Many in this country have been brought up to think that they are “owed” something merely because they were born. If anything, the opposite is true. Because we are born into this world, we have certain obligations we must meet.

As children, we have obligations to our parents to love, obey, and respect them (**Eph. 6:1-3**). Married folks have obligations to their spouses (**Eph. 5:22-33**), and children (**Eph. 6:4; Titus 2:4**). By being born in this country, we have obligations to pay taxes, and to follow the laws of this country (**Rom. 13:1-7; Matt. 22:21**). We have obligations toward our employer (**Col. 3:22-23; Eph. 6:5-8**), or toward our employees, however the case may be (**Col. 3:22-24; Eph. 6:9**). These obligations are ever with us, it seems.

Yet, in our ever-hurried lives, we forget the One to whom we owe the greatest debt, and to whom we are the most obligated. Yes friends, we have obligations to God! When we forget this fact, we are sure to have problems. This is because it is God who must come first in our lives. We must love Him above all others (**Matt. 22:37**). We must serve Him and worship Him “in spirit and in truth” (**Jn. 4:24**). It is to Him that we owe everything. We belong to Him as slaves (**Rom. 6:16-18, 12:1-2**), being transplanted into “the kingdom of His dear Son” (**Col. 1:13**). Therefore, let us look to the Bible and consider some of our obligations toward God.

We Are Obligated To Worship God As He Directs.

Many have the attitude that one can simply worship God as he/she pleases, and it is acceptable with God. This is simply not true. God has always expected men to worship Him as he directs. A failure to worship God as He directed is the reason why Cain’s sacrifice was rejected (**Gen. 4:1-7**)! It was this same failure to worship God as He directed that condemned the nation of Judah. They thought they could worship God and be free to worship their idols, too. God said that such was not possible (**Jer. 7:8-10**). Please read what Christ said about worship. He told the Samaritan woman, “God is Spirit: and those who

worship him must worship in spirit and in truth” (**Jn. 4:24**). God has not changed His mind about worship! We are obligated worship as He directs, or we will be found worshipping Him in vain (**Matt. 15:8-9**).

Though the world tells us to “worship as you please” and tells us the way religion “ought to be,” we must respect God’s will and realize we are obligated to worship Him the way He directs, if we expect to please Him!

How has God directed us to worship Him? By reading the New Testament, we learn that God expects worship to Him to be done as we: sing praises to His name, preach His word, pray to Him, partake of the Lord’s Supper, and give as we have been prospered (**Acts 2:42, 20:7; I Cor. 16:1-2; Eph. 5:19**). All aspects of our worship must give glory, honor, and praise to our Creator, Ruler and Sustainer! We are not assembling (**Heb. 10:25**) to worship ourselves, nor to have a “fashion” show, nor for free baby-sitting!

Let us examine ourselves as to the true reasons why we gather together. If God is the focus and center of our worship, we’ll not be enamored at the possibility of adding instruments of music, games, prizes, plays, dramas, and other such nonsense. If God is the focus and center of our worship, we’ll realize that we are not the “audience,” as such, but we are the participants in worship wherein God Almighty is the “audience”! If God is the focus, we will be interested in what pleases Him in worship, and doing nothing more or less! (**Jn. 4:24**)

We Are Obligated To Repent Of Our Sins.

In his sermon on Mars’ Hill, Paul told the Athenians, “The times of this ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all men everywhere to repent” (**Acts 17:30**). The phrase, “All men everywhere” includes you, and includes me! We are guilty of sin before God (**Rom. 3:23**). Because this is so, we need to be willing to repent of our sins (**Lk. 13:3**) and live our lives for the Lord.

The word “repent” means, “to have another mind, to change the opinion or purpose with regard to sin. It is equivalent to the Old Testament word ‘turn’ ...” (International Standard Bible Encyclopedia). In literal terms, this word means, “about face, forward march.” It is a change of one’s mind which results in a change of one’s life. In the immediate context of **Acts 17**,

Continued from Page Two, "Obligations I Have To God"

people were expected to repent of following their idols. Another example of what repentance looks like is seen in the text of **Ephesians 4:25-32**. (Read that passage closely.) Friend, have you repented of following your idols instead of following God? You must, for he commands *"all men every where to repent"*!

Conclusion

To those who deny man's need for obedience to the Almighty, let them be reminded of our obligations! Our

obligations demand action, not inaction. We are not fulfilling our duty when we subscribe to the "faith only" philosophy. "Faith only" is false doctrine (**Jas. 2:24**)! We are obligated to our Lord, and bear responsibilities toward Him while on earth.

Let us consider well our obligations to God. Christians have these obligations we have studied above, and many others. Why is this? It is because Christians are to be the servants of God (**Rom. 6:16-18, 12:1-2**).

Credit: The Old Paths - 12/2/12 ♦

It's Too Late! By Kent E. Heaton, Sr.

It's eleven-fifty-nine on April 15, and the tax return is not filed. Eight-fifty-nine chimes on the wall clock and the store closes at nine. The last ferry to the mainland leaves in one minute. Sixty seconds tick away and the minute disappears—it's too late.

How many plans have failed waiting until the last minute? How often good intentions served more than actions that waited until the last minute? The frenzied pace of desperation in realizing only one minute remains of time. The last minute—so precious, so short—too late. Lives are spent preparing to change at the eleventh hour yet facing death at 10:59. Too late the call and so little to be done.

Some things are of little importance if waited upon at the last minute. Missing a train at the last minute may mean waiting for the next train. The store closing before you arrive means having to wait until it opens again in the morning. When death calls, it only calls once! It is sudden, swift, decisive and unbending. It's too late!

Life can become so involved with all the busy matters that seem important at the time. We can put things off until another time because we have time. Have not all things continued as they are until this time? Why then should we hurry about those matters that are more important to the future than the present? "Don't worry, be happy, live today" is what we tell ourselves. The day dawns when all these things change and it's too late.

God tells us to think about our life as a vapor. **James 4:14** reads, *"whereas you do not know what will happen tomorrow. For what is your life? It is even a vapor that appears for a little time and then vanishes away."* How empty a vapor is that appears for a short time and then we look and it is gone! How empty our lives are that appear for a short time and then we look, as the clock

strikes 10:59—it's too late.

Jesus told the story of a man who thought he had everything to live for—but it was too late. *"Then He spoke a parable to them, saying: 'The ground of a certain rich man yielded plentifully. And he thought within himself, saying, 'What shall I do, since I have no room to store my crops?' So he said, 'I will do this: I will pull down my barns and build greater, and there I will store all my crops and my goods. And I will say to my soul, 'Soul, you have many goods laid up for many years; take your ease; eat, drink, and be merry.'" "But God said to him, 'Fool, This night your soul will be required of you; then whose will those things be which you have provided?' "So is he who lays up treasure for himself, and is not rich toward God" (**Luke 12:16-21**).*

Jesus goes on to explain to His disciples they should not be as concerned about physical matters as much as they should spiritual matters. He says in **verse 23**, *"The life is more than meat, and the body is more than raiment."* In **verse 31**, He says, *"But rather seek ye the kingdom of God; and all these things shall be added to you."*

The perspective Jesus offers is to consider the vanity of life and the precious little time we have in life. We cannot wait until the last minute to seek God. We cannot know when the last hour is so we should always be making preparation to leave this world and be with God. We have so little time in this world and yet, during this time, we will choose our next world. God says we are "fools" if we wait until the last minute because then it is too late.

Are you waiting for a better time to arrange your life in order with God? You are lost and have no hope of salvation and yet you wait for a better time? You want to sow

Continued from Page Three, "It's Too Late!"

your wild oats today and turn to God tomorrow? Tomorrow may never come—don't wait until the last minute—you will not make it!

salvation I have helped you." Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation."

Credit: www.moodychurchofchrist.com ♦

Take strong note of **2 Corinthians 6:2**, "for He says: "In an acceptable time I have heard you, and in the day of

Watch For The Danger Signs

When prayer is a burden and not a privilege,
When Bible reading is dull and puts men to sleep,
When the sermon is too long,
When the preacher's sermon makes me angry,
When I try to make excuses for my sins,
When I feel I am being left out,
When I don't feel like singing,
When I am sick and want people to visit me . . . and yet, I seldom visit anyone, sick or well,
When someone is restored back to God and I don't rejoice with them,
When it bothers me to be called on to give more,
When I get all I want and think I need in one hour a week at church,
When these things happen, watch out for **SPIRITUAL DECAY!!!** ♦

Things That Impress Visitors

1. Members that day dream or sleep through sermon; talk during observance of the Lord's Supper.
2. Members that open a bottle of pop during services which makes a noise each time it opens.
3. Scribbling in and playing with the hymnals.
4. Members who whisper, talk, write notes, and pass pictures, etc. during services.
5. Members who are privileged to serve during the worship, but are so over medicated that they sound drunk.
6. Persistent late-comers who disturb and distract the worshipers.
7. Members who do not speak to visitors. ♦

What Must I Do To Be Saved?

Hear and Learn - Rom. 10:17 m. 10:9-10 ; 1 Pet. 3:21 ; John 6:45; 17:3
Believe - Heb. 11:6; John 6:29; 8:24
Repent - Luke 13:3; Acts 3:19; 17:30
Confess the Lord - Matt. 10:32-33; Romans 10:9-10; 1 Pet. 3:21
Be Baptized - Mark 16:16; Acts 22:16; Gal. 3:26-27
Continue in the Apostles' Teaching - Acts 2:42; 2 Tim. 3:14-17

About the Hillcrest church of Christ

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Green Bay, WI 54313



Schedule of Assembly

Bible Study: Sunday, 9:00am
Worship Service: Sunday, 10:00am
Bible Study: Wednesday, 7:00pm*

*A song service is held on the last Wednesday of every month