

If you still insist on saying baptism is not part of the gospel that saves, can you tell me which parts of the gospel save and which parts do not?

Your last statement is another instance of gainsaying the gospel of Christ. You said, “Those who are not saved by faith alone are not saved at all.” James, inspired of the Holy Spirit said, “You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only” (Jas. 2:24).

- Steven F. Deaton

For **audio recordings** of our **gospel meeting** with Jarrod Jacobs, go to our Web Site or write to our street address.

Send us the names and addresses of those who would like to receive this bulletin or a correspondence course. It’s all FREE!

“If you faint in the day of adversity, Your strength is small” (Prov. 24:10).

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What God Has Joined Together

In response to the Pharisees’ question about divorce, Jesus said, “Therefore what God has joined together, let not man separate” (Matt. 19:6). God joins two people who have the lawful right to be married, and man is not to undue it. There are other things the Lord has joined together that no man has the right to sever.

Worship

The Holy Spirit revealed all truth to the apostles and prophets, including matters pertaining to worship (Jn. 16:13; 2 Pet. 1:3; Jn. 4:24). God has joined the first day of the week to two activities of worship, the breaking of bread and gathering of money (Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1-2). Contrary to this, some churches observe the Lord’s Supper on Saturday or Thursday. Others take up a collection every time they meet, whether it’s Sunday, Monday, or Friday. When God said to do these things on the first day of the week, it ruled out all other days. Just like when He told Moses priests were to come from the tribe of Levi, it ruled out all other tribes (cf. Heb. 7:12-14). Those who sever the Lord’s Supper or collection from the first day of the week do so against God’s authority. “What God has joined together, let not man separate.”

Salvation

There are those who want to dismember the commands of Jesus and His apostles concerning salvation. He said, “He who believes and is baptized will be saved, he who does not believe will be condemned” (Mk. 16:16). There are men who try to separate believe from baptism. They say faith alone is sufficient to save us. Baptism, to them, is a thing to be done at some point in the life of a Christian, but is not necessary to inherit eternal life. Peter said, “Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Amazingly, some look at this command and say repentance is required to have your sins remitted, but not

baptism. Men who divide belief, repentance, and/or baptism stand in rebellion to God's will. "What God has joined together, let not man separate."

Christ and the Church

Paul said, "And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all" (Eph. 1:22-23). Jesus blood purchased the church (Acts 20:28). He gave His life for her (Eph. 5:25). Yet, there are men who tell us it is not necessary to be a member of any church in order to be saved. They may say all that matters is a "personal relationship" with Jesus. The problem is a "personal relationship" with Jesus can only be had by ones who are part of His body, the church. Reconciliation to God takes place through the cross (Christ) in one body, the church (Eph. 2:16). The peace of God that can rule in your heart is found only in one body, the church (Col. 3:15). Those who say the head can be severed from the body, do so against God's Word. "What God has joined together, let not man separate."

When God joins two things together, man has no right to separate them. Any who approach the gospel of Christ in a frivolous and cavalier manner, who arrogantly assume they can rework God's will, will face Him in judgment one day. They will be found wanting and cast forth into everlasting darkness (2 Thes. 1:7-9). Let us not be of that number.

- Steven F. Deaton

Correspondence

The following are excerpts from a Web Site reader's letter. It is an attempt to justify salvation before and without water baptism. Our response follows.

The following syllogism demonstrates that water baptism is not necessary for salvation:

a. If one has the Holy Spirit they are saved. You can not have the Holy Spirit and

*be lost. Romans 8:9; Galatians 4:6 and 1 John 4:13 are clear on this.
b. Cornelius "received" the Holy Spirit before he was baptized (Acts 10:47).
c. Therefore Cornelius was already saved before he was baptized.*

In 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 Paul tells us that the gospel is the belief that Jesus is the Christ, who died for our sins and then arose from the dead. Baptism is not mentioned here because it is not part of the gospel that saves.

Those who are not saved by faith alone are not saved at all.

[name]

I appreciate your efforts to defend what you believe (Jude 3). It is rare that people will discuss matters pertaining to the soul, and rarer still that they will be as forceful as you. I am sure you want me to keep an open mind and not be offended by your words. I ask the same of you.

Your argument that Cornelius and his household were saved before and without water baptism, because they were filled with the Holy Spirit before they were baptized, proves too much. And, what proves too much proves nothing.

John the immerser was filled with the Spirit from his mother's womb (Lk. 1:15). Your argument would necessitate John being saved before and without belief (or repentance or confession, cf. Rom. 10:9-13). Do you believe John was saved from his mother's womb?

As for 1 Corinthians 15:1-4, those verses do not discuss repentance or confession. So, according to your argument, repentance and confession are not part of the gospel. Do you believe one can be saved without repentance and confession? If so, you contradict Christ and the Holy Spirit (Lk. 12:8-9; 13:3; Rom. 10:9-13; Acts 2:38; 3:19). Likewise, when you declare the baptism is not part of the gospel that saves, you oppose the Lord and the Spirit (Mk. 16:16; Acts 2:38; 22:16). Peter specifically said, "There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism..." (1 Pet. 3:21).