

Baptism

June 15th, 2008

1). Mark 16:15-16

And He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 "He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.

- As we read the words spoken by the Lord here, recorded in Mark's gospel we could be mistaken into believing that baptism has a part to play in the salvation we already possess – the salvation of our spirit.
- But both the evidence of scripture and simple logic based on that scripture will easily show that this is not the case.

2). Firstly, let's pull out some things from our two verses in Mark.

- The phrase 'go into all the world' can be misleading
- The word 'world' = Greek word – *kosmos* = an orderly arrangement. The inhabited world in a broad or narrow sense.
- In other words, 'world' can be understood as the whole world, or that particular part of the world which is in view.
- And by comparing scripture with scripture we would see that it must be the latter and not the former.
- Remember Christ's own words concerning the scope of His earthly ministry –

Matthew 15:24

But He answered and said, "I was not sent except to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."

- When the Lord sent out the twelve, His instructions to them paralleled His own ministry –

Matthew 10:5-7

These twelve Jesus sent out and commanded them, saying: "Do not go into the way of the Gentiles, and do not enter a city of the Samaritans. 6 "But go rather to the lost sheep of the house of Israel. 7 "And as you go, preach, saying, 'The kingdom of heaven is at hand.'

- This is further corroborated by what we read from Paul to the church in Galatia-

Galatians 2:7-9

But on the contrary, when they saw that the gospel for the uncircumcised had been committed to me, as the gospel for the circumcised was to Peter 8 (for He who worked effectively in Peter for the apostleship to the circumcised also worked effectively in me toward the Gentiles), 9 and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we should go to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised.

- Going into all the world, in a **broad** sense, that is, *going to the Gentiles*, is the ministry that was given to Paul. Going into all the world, in a **narrow** sense, *going to the Jews*, is the ministry given to the disciples – the only ones present when Jesus spoke the words recorded in Mark and confirmed here in Galatians.

3). Secondly, let's notice the order given to us in our Mark scripture – 'He who believes and is baptized will be saved.'

- We see here believing, then baptism, resulting in salvation. So our obvious question should be, 'Which salvation are we talking about?'
- IT CANNOT BE ETERNAL SALVATION, THE FREE GIFT. If baptism is a prerequisite of eternal salvation, then eternal salvation is through works. Something that is completely contrary to the teaching of scripture—

Ephesians 2:8-9

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.

- Clearly we are dealing with something subsequent to our being born again.

4). Thirdly, we have the phrase, '*he who does not believe will be condemned.*' We may want this phrase to apply to the eternally lost rather than the eternally saved, because we don't want to think in terms of "condemnation" to a Christian. However, the belief in question here is not belief in God's provision for sin through death and shed blood, but belief in the gospel of the glories of Christ – the Son of God and His coming Kingdom. The very message that Jesus was sent to proclaim –

Luke 4:43

...but He said to them, "I must preach the kingdom of God to the other cities also, because for this purpose I have been sent."

- We need to understand the word 'condemned' in Mark, in relation to the eternally saved, in the same way that it is used in by Paul to the church in Rome-

Romans 8:1

There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit.

- And we could see here that **walking according to the Spirit** and **being baptized** can be seen as *synonymous*.

So, let's look at other scriptural evidence for baptism/walking according to the Spirit being connected to events beyond the point of our eternal salvation—.

5). Let's go firstly to our foundation in Genesis where we find our foundational type for baptism –

Genesis 1:9-13

Then God said, "Let the waters under the heavens be gathered together into one place, and let the dry land appear"; and it was so. 10 And God called the dry land Earth, and the gathering together of the waters He called Seas. And God saw that it was good. 11 Then God said, "Let the earth bring forth grass, the herb that yields seed, and the fruit tree that yields fruit according to its kind, whose seed is in itself, on the earth"; and it was so. 12 And the earth brought forth grass, the herb that yields seed according to its kind, and the tree that yields fruit, whose seed is in itself according to its kind. And God saw that it was good. 13 So the evening and the morning were the third day.

- It is the first day, when light shines into the darkness, that is the foundational picture of our eternal salvation. It is only after the process of the earth's restoration has begun that we come to the events of the third day. These days have a beginning point and move inexorably toward a terminal point – the 7th day – the Sabbath Rest.
- The **third day** and its connection with **Christ's resurrection** is inescapable.

- And what do we find here in Genesis, in the beginning of Scripture? The dry land being brought from beneath the waters, out of the place of death, by the power of the Spirit, in a sovereign act of God, in order to produce fruit.
- So our foundational type shows us that only that which has been raised by the Spirit is in a position to produce fruit.
- And we would also note that this fruitful land, coming from the place of death, is for a specific purpose – to create the environment in which Man would live to have dominion – replacing the rule of Satan – realized in the 7th day.

6). Secondly we can go to another of our foundational types – the Red Sea crossing by Israel –

Exodus 14:21-22

Then Moses stretched out his hand over the sea; and the LORD caused the sea to go back by a strong east wind all that night, and made the sea into dry land, and the waters were divided. 22 So the children of Israel went into the midst of the sea on the dry ground, and the waters were a wall to them on their right hand and on their left.

- Now this event comes **three days** after the exodus from Egypt and is subsequent to the slaying of the Passover lambs, the application of the blood and the substitutionary death of the firstborn – the means by which Israel’s eternal salvation is sovereignly brought to pass.
- Having died a vicarious death in Egypt on the night of the Passover, Israel was then buried in the Red Sea to be raised to newness of life...to be led by the Spirit to the land that God had promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob...*in order to be established at the head of the nations within a Theocracy, thereby receiving their inheritance.*

7). Both our foundational types, from Genesis and Exodus, show an event that is subsequent to an initial sovereign act of God on behalf of His creation, and makes clear to us that coming up out of the water, out of the place of death by the power of the Spirit, has to do with newness of life, walking according to the Spirit (and not according to the flesh), and is inextricably connected with a land and an inheritance in that land in order to fulfill God’s stated purpose for Man – ‘let them have dominion’.

8). So if we take all this back to Jesus’ words recorded in Mark, this is exactly what we see in relation to the post resurrection Israel of his day.

- The offer of the Kingdom of the heavens (a heavenly land that had been promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob) was being offered to a generation of eternally saved Jews, who, if they were going to receive this realm of the Kingdom needed to repent. The repentance needed on their behalf was for them to **change their minds** about their Messiah...and choosing to die to their flesh and to walk in newness of life. If they were to do this, pictured in being raised from the dead in baptism, then they would be saved – the salvation to be revealed in the last times – the salvation of their souls with a view to attaining a position with Christ in His Kingdom.

9). Now in respect of ourselves, we know that –

1Corinthians 5:7b

...For indeed Christ, our Passover, was sacrificed for us.

- Christ as our Passover, as with Israel’s Passover, denotes both *the means* and *point* of our eternal salvation, where we pass from ‘death unto life’.

- And we will remember that the free gift of eternal life is as a result of a sovereign act of God – the finished work of God the Son on the cross of Calvary, and is ours when we exercise faith in this finished work – God’s provision for sin through death and shed blood.
- It involves nothing more than our faith, our belief in God’s provision –

Acts 16:30-33

And he brought them out and said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" 31 So they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." 32 Then they spoke the word of the Lord to him and to all who were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their stripes. And immediately he and all his family were baptized.

- As we see here in our scripture, with respect to the Philippian Jailer, our participation in baptism, even though it may follow hard on the heels of our ‘believing on the Lord Jesus Christ, is an event that comes after having been eternally saved and so has nothing to do with eternal salvation of itself.

10). Also, the actual physical process of baptism has no value of itself – it is neither magical, nor mystical. So it would not be unreasonable to ask, ‘Why bother?’

- Well we should bother because of what the act of baptism teaches us.
- It is something we should do in the full knowledge of what it declares our intentions and desires to be. It is a visual statement of our faith in that which God has said about the means of entry into His coming Kingdom.

11). Let us look to Jesus as our example –

Matthew 3:13-4:1

Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me?" 15 But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. 16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." 4:1 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil.

- Clearly, Jesus did not need to be baptized for very obvious reasons, but look at the events: He comes out of the water and a declaration is made from on High concerning His Sonship— and therefore *His right to rulership* (Cf. 2 Samuel 7:14). He is led by the Spirit into the wilderness where His worthiness to take Satan’s scepter is proven.
 - We have then, baptism – the leading of the Spirit – resulting in worthiness to receive the inheritance –

Hebrews 1:1-4

God, who at various times and in various ways spoke in time past to the fathers by the prophets, 2 has in these last days spoken to us by His Son, whom He has appointed heir of all things, through whom also He made the worlds; 3 who being the brightness of His glory and the express image of His person, and upholding all things by the word of His power, when He had by Himself purged our sins, sat down

at the right hand of the Majesty on high, 4 having become so much better than the angels, as He has by inheritance obtained a more excellent name than they.

- And notice the fulfillment of this event as recorded in –

1Peter 3:18-22

For Christ also suffered once for sins, the just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh but made alive by the Spirit, 19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 ¶ There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, 22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

- There are many things to note in this scripture, but firstly let's see this – Christ dies, having been put to death in the flesh, and is raised from the dead by the power of the Spirit, to the position where 'angels and authorities and powers have been made subject to Him'.
- And although He is not yet exercising this authority, as He waits for the revelation of the many sons who are to be brought to glory, the clear outcome of His resurrection is rulership and inheritance.

12). And we know what the scripture says in respect to ourselves with regards to this –

1Peter 1:3-9

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who according to His abundant mercy has begotten us again to a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 4 to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that does not fade away, reserved in heaven for you, 5 who are kept by the power of God through faith for salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. 6 ¶ In this you greatly rejoice, though now for a little while, if need be, you have been grieved by various trials, 7 that the genuineness of your faith, being much more precious than gold that perishes, though it is tested by fire, may be found to praise, honor, and glory at the revelation of Jesus Christ, 8 whom having not seen you love. Though now you do not see Him, yet believing, you rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, 9 receiving the end of your faith--the salvation of your souls.

- Our living hope/our inheritance reserved in heaven/the salvation of our soul is possible through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.
- Our eternal life is based on His death *apart from resurrection*.
- Our inheritance and a position of rulership with Him in the Millennial Kingdom is based on His resurrection.

13). **Romans 6:3-12**

Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. 7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.

8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God.

11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts.

- How will we be united together in the likeness of His death? Remember –

1Peter 3:18b

... being put to death in the flesh

Colossians 2:12

...buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

- And here we have it. *Through baptism*, we are buried with Him in death, symbolizing the death of our flesh, as we go under the water – then we are raised from the dead, by the power of the Spirit, as we come out of the water, to walk in newness of life.
- Our old sin nature, the ‘old man’ (that which is associated with the word ‘flesh’) is to remain in the place of death so that we no longer be slaves of sin, walking according to the flesh, but being led instead by the Spirit, so as to be fruitful in the antitype of the 3rd Day of Genesis –

John 15:8

"By this My Father is glorified, that you bear much fruit; so you will be My disciples.

Matthew 13:23

"But he who received seed on the good ground is he who hears the word and understands it, who indeed bears fruit and produces: some a hundredfold, some sixty, some thirty."

- The Spirit’s leading, as with Israel out of Egypt, is in one direction – to the heavenly realm of the Kingdom promised to Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and their descendants –

14). Which brings us nicely back to Noah as we saw in **1 Peter 1:20** –

...who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 ¶ There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

- Look at God’s further commentary on this in –

Heb 11:6-7

But 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. 7 By faith Noah, being divinely warned of things not yet seen, moved with godly fear, prepared an ark for the saving of his household, by which he condemned the world and became heir of the righteousness which is according to faith.

- Note what it was that brought about salvation for Noah and his household – it was his faith, his belief in what God had said concerning things ‘not yet seen’ that made the saving of eight souls possible.
- Knowing what God had said concerning those things not yet seen, Noah and his household organized their lives accordingly – the building of the ark – resulting in the saving of souls – Noah becoming the heir of righteousness which is according to faith.

15). And we see that the antitype of this, ‘which now saves us’ is baptism.

- It is because we have believed what God has said concerning things not yet seen –

Heb 11:1

Now faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.

Romans 8:23-25

Not only that, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body. 24 For we were saved in this hope, but hope that is seen is not hope; for why does one still hope for what he sees? 25 But if we hope for what we do not see, we eagerly wait for it with perseverance.

Hebrews 4:1

Therefore, since a promise remains of entering His rest, let us fear lest any of you seem to have come short of it.

- We need to organize our lives (build our ‘ark’ if you will) according to what we know and believe about what God has planned and will carry out as is written in His Word. This prepares us to receive the salvation to be revealed in the last time.

16). As we plunge beneath the water and rise again, we are declaring our intention to be dead to self and to walk according to the Spirit as an on-going process.

- We declare our intention to keep our old man in the place of death
- We declare that we have believed what God has said about this in relation to entrance into the coming Kingdom.
- We declare our intention to be found worthy at the Judgment Seat of Christ.

Colossians 3:1-6

If then you were raised with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ is, sitting at the right hand of God. 2 Set your mind on things above, not on things on the earth. 3 For you died, and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 4 When Christ who is our life appears, then you also will appear with Him in glory. 5 ¶ Therefore put to death your members which are on the earth: fornication, uncleanness, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 Because of these things the wrath of God is coming upon the sons of disobedience...

17). To bring us full circle then, back to Mark 16 – if we will believe (those things which God has said concerning things not yet seen) and be baptized (keep our old man in the place of death so as to walk in newness of life, led by the Spirit) **then we will be saved.**

- We will receive the salvation of our soul
- We will be adopted as a first born son
- We will become a coheir with Christ and be part of His Bride
- We will rule with Him in the Kingdom which is to come.

