

IS 'BAPTISM' ESSENTIAL TO SALVATION ???

Have you every stopped to just write down what you believed about something? It is a very good exercise in building your faith.

1. The first point in which I need to renew myself is the fundamental Christian belief that God is not a liar, nor does He lie. [Titus 1:1-2] God does not lead us down false pathways, just as He does not write to confuse us or to trick us, or to tease us with some great hidden mystery. God is not cruel in any way at all, and neither is He capricious or duplicitous. Satan is the father of all lies, confusions, deceptions, and He is the one that teases man with the allure of great hidden mysteries. Satan has been telling people since way back at the Garden of Eden that this or that is just essential, or true, only to be proven, yet again, to be a liar. Ask Adam and Eve about "those apples".

2. If this all powerful, all wise, all creating, all knowing, all loving "God", who does not lie, says that salvation is granted at the point of simple faith, then so be it. If this God, the supreme being, says it, then I must accept it, as it is, for He is "God" and I am but His creation. But, if God also says that salvation is only granted at the point of "faith expressed" and "to faith surrendered", through the appeal of baptism, then so be that. I must accept all of His wisdom and way, just as I would have to accept any of the other God given requests and commands, ---for He is God and I am but His creation.

[We must always remember that the whole salvation process is focused on the death of Christ on the cross. The simple fact is, that Jesus had to die. There was no other way possible for God to offer to man His hand of mercy. Jesus had to die!! ---Having got that one point firmly in our thinking, and in our communicating, we have to also recognize that it takes faith on my part to reach out and accept the gift of God's grace / atonement. The requested faith action is the result of having heard the message of Jesus, come to a point where I believe it, and am willing to totally submit to it, without any 'modern' additions of redefinitions.. I must repent of my old actions and confess my sinful state, as well as my belief in Jesus being God's Son, sent to earth to die in place of me. And then I must be fully immersed in water (baptism). Theses bits we are asked to do, do not earn for us our salvation. They are the appeal we make, to God, burying the old man so as to allow the new man to arise from the grave as a born again son of God, fully adopted into the family of God.]

3. The second point in which we need to renew our minds is the fact that the total bible is inspired by this Supreme Being, this one who is God, Yahweh / Jehovah. Then God, who has revealed Himself to us in the pages of this most remarkable book, fully, becomes our guide and sovereign. He has told us all that we need to know, for now, and all we need to know about the coming of forever. The Bible is without error or deception, being a perfect mirrored reflection of the author and the authors will. It is one, complete

statement, and we must listen to the whole message and not to just bits and pieces.

4. The conclusion we must reach, after having read and thought about, the word, is that since the words of God do not lie, and since as God-The Supreme Being, He knows what is best, and how He wants man to carry out that the particulars of that will, then the truth about how we are saved therefore does not reside in one particular point take from the whole to the discarding of the rest of the message. The whole truth about how we are saved must exist, somehow, in all the things that God has said, together and unified. If God is to continue to be fully God in our minds and hearts, then I must allow Him to reign as the “Absolute Sovereign” or else He is not a ‘god’ at all. To argue any other way, is to argue against the divinity and sovereignty of God while supporting a mere religious exterior.

5. I believe that God is, at this moment, the same as He has always been, -fully God. I believe that this God is the divine and loving creator, the power behind it all that controls. The will that I must obey is the supreme will that I must obey.

6. I believe that this God is totally kind and totally beneficent, that He is not now nor has He ever been capricious or cruel or callous. I believe that He has revealed Himself to the fullest extent that man can know and understand.

7. I believe that He has told us the simple message of what we need to do to inherit eternal life and that that message of how to be saved is contained in the inerrant words of the Bible clearly and succinctly.

8. I believe that I must read **all** that God has to say, and I believe that I must listen to the whole message and do as I am told. Yes, ‘I must’ read His message and ‘I must’ submit to His Lordship in every possible way, for after all is said, He is God ! If I chose to go only a partial way towards accepting and honouring His absolute Lordship, then the partial job that I choose to do is actually denying Him absolutely, -it is covering sin with a bit of jam.

9. The third point in which we need to refresh ourselves is the fact that God is a God of grace and mercy. He has given to us the sacrifice we need for the cleansing of our souls, Jesus, a sacrifice that we could not give on our own because of our sins and rebellions. Salvation is not an act of work, for I can not in any way ‘earn’ my way to heaven for I have already forfeited my right of purity through the fact of my sin. I have taken myself out of the list of possible saviours of my soul, leaving only one option.

10. So, I cannot earn my salvation, and thus I can do no work that will justify me before God. The shattered pitcher can no longer carry water. However, I can do things which can allow other things to happen within my life. I can **listen**, that is something I choose to do. **I can consider my sins** and **I can allow my heart** to feel the guilt and remorse it needs to feel as I allow myself to come to a point of **repentance**. **I can pray** to God. **I can** allow my **faith in God to grow**, giving through my **belief in God** room to

begin to grow in my life. And I can go up and be baptized, to complete the God given appeal process, presenting my simple act of faith, to God, for the treasure of salvation that has been made available, by God's only begotten Son, Jesus, at the cross, for me and for anyone else who wants it enough to do what God has asked **The fact of 'this want' is just as much an action as 'baptism' is and neither is it a work where I earn salvation!** My 'want to' and 'my obedience', are both are things that I must do, just like faith is something that I must do and so is belief.

God did the saving of all mankind at the cross, if man makes the move to choose to accept the gift of God, then He will apply the blood to my soul's needs. God requires that I accept His gift, that I appeal for His gift, and that I continue to honor His gift by making the choice of making Him the Lord of my life, again today, and again tomorrow, and so it goes, on and on and on.

-- with daily submission and the daily acting out of my allegiance to Him as Lord, Supernal, I 'work hard at being the person He wants me to be, because I love Him, and I sure that I need Him, for He is my only hope. He is the whole worlds only hope.