

FROM THE PREACHER

Objections to Baptism: Baptism is a Work, pt. 2

Having laid the foundation for this discussion last week, we will now lay out some arguments as to why baptism is *not* a work. As previously mentioned, the concept under discussion is that of salvation by grace, through faith, and apart from works as expressed by Paul in, for example, Ephesians 2:8–9. We must help others see that by “works” Paul does not have baptism in mind.

First, I would point out that the Paul who wrote Ephesians 2:8–9 is the same Paul who wrote Romans 6:1–4, 1 Corinthians 12:12–13, Galatians 3:26–27, Colossians 2:11–13, and Titus 3:4–5. He also spoke the words recorded in Acts 22:16. Paul obviously does not have any problem connecting baptism with salvation. Such a recognition should be a major red flag for those wanting to label baptism as a “work.”

Second, by “apart from works,” Paul does *not* mean “and you cannot do anything.” What Paul is doing in passages like Ephesians 2:8–9 is contrasting two systems of salvation: a system of *grace* and a system of *works*. A system of grace is one in which a gift is freely given by one to another. It is benevolent in nature. The gift is not earned and the recipient can lay no claim to having deserved the gift; the recipient can only render a “thank you.” Examples of such a system include a parent giving a gift to a child, or freely giving assistance to someone in need. This is the only system by which we can think of our relationship to God: he has given us the undeserved gift of salvation, and all we can return is “thank you.”

A system of works on the other hand is transactional in nature. In such a system, two people agree on specified deeds for specified pay. Upon completion of the deed, pay is given as proper due. There is no gift or “thank you;” there is work and earned pay. We all recognize such a system: it’s called a job. When you do your work and receive a paycheck, your boss is not being benevolent, he is giving you what you’ve earned. This is the type of thinking that a Christian absolutely *cannot* have when approaching God. As soon as we begin thinking of our actions (whether belief, baptism, prayer, good works, etc.) as somehow *compelling* God to act on our behalf, we have entered into a system of works-salvation, a system foreign to Christianity.

We must show that a system of grace still allows for the recipient of the gift to *do something* to receive the gift. Again, the recipient does not *earn*, but *receives*. By way of analogy, unwrapping a present in no way diminishes the fact that it is a present! But how about a biblical example: the exodus from Egypt. In the exodus, God is rescuing the Israelites because of His covenantal love for them. They are slaves, in need of rescue, and can only cry out to God – no earning salvation here. When God goes to rescue the Israelites from Egypt, He tells them to sacrifice a lamb and put the blood on their doorposts. Then, the people are to follow Moses to the Red Sea which God divides for them so they can walk across. Now, by sacrificing the lamb, putting the blood on the doorposts, following Moses, and crossing the Red Sea, do the Israelites in any way *earn* their salvation? Of course not. Did they have to *do* all those things to participate in the salvation God was bringing about? Yes! In the same way, we in no way *earn* salvation by baptism, even though we must *do* it to participate in the salvation brought about in Christ Jesus.

In short: baptism is not a proscribed work, but a prescribed act to receive the gift of salvation. I hope these articles on baptism have been helpful. May God bless you. Thanks for reading.

Blake Hudson

BACK TO SCHOOL ICE CREAM SOCIAL

Bring your
favorite
flavor to
share!

This Sunday!

After evening
services in the
fellowship hall.



Adult
Bible Study

**Sunday morning's Adult Bible class
will be covering Acts 9:23-43**

Our next Ladies Bible
Study will be August 16th,
in the Fellowship Hall.



Game Day! August 23, 2025

A new initiative for 2yo - 5th grade: Bible
Scouts. We will have a planning meeting
for those interested in participating on
September 14th, after evening service.
For more information please, see Blake.



WITH DEEPEST
Sympathy

We want to
express love and
sympathy to the
family and
friends of
Murray Norman, Rose Carter's father, who
passed away Saturday, August 2. Services
will be this Saturday, August 9, 2025, at
10am at the Church of Christ in El Campo,
Texas.

Dear Church Family,

On behalf of our dad, my
siblings along with myself,
Gerry, Sierra, TJ & Amber
we just want to say thank
you! Thank you for loving
on and caring for dad for the past 8 years.
However, we would love to express our
gratitude for all of the love you all have shown
us by way of food from individuals, food from
groups, gifts, all of the calls, the texts, the
prayers but mostly the love. We will never be
able to say thank you enough but we mean it
and love all of you. From the youngest to the
eldest member here, we've felt the love from
everyone. God truly blessed us with a great
Christian family.

In Him,

The Austin's and the family of the late Mr.
Robert Earl Rowllins



The Austin family as they grieve the loss of
Sharon's fathers...Deena Damron continues to
have health issues...David Johnson, has been
admitted to MD Anderson...Karen Lowe, for
strength as she cares for Johnny...Gloria Mares, is
having a procedure Monday...Jackie Haynes and
her son Gabriel Cranford, Jackie is having back
surgery next week and Gabriel will be worried
about his mom...Doretha Mack, Kathleen
Vereen's mother, has been placed on
hospice...Bryan Rice, Mary Miller's grandson,
needs prayer...Linda Shell, friend of Gloria Mares,
needs prayer...Andy Tilley, Gary Faycosh's
brother, is home but, continues to
struggle...Johnny Toon, Karen Lowe's son, has
been diagnosed with a brain tumor...Lori Sigrest,
daughter of Rick Arnold, had a stroke

PLEASE REMEMBER:

Dorothy Booth, Robert Gautney, Jeanie Granger, Erin West
Janik, Marie Leblanc, Karen Smith, Ceaser Vereen, Maggie
Walker