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Baptism and Blood

- by Doy Moyer

The blood of Jesus saves us from our sins: the blood was "shed for many for the remission of sins" (Matthew 26:28). What does baptism have to do with the blood?

Peter preached, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2:38). Note that the expression "for remission of sins" is the same as in Matthew 26:28. Jesus shed His blood for the remission of sins. How can both be true?

The answer is in Romans 6:3-4: "Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." This tells us that when we are baptized into Christ we are baptized into His death. We contact Christ's blood when we obey the gospel and are baptized into Christ.

What saves us? The blood of Jesus. How do we avail ourselves of the blood? Through baptism into Christ. Is baptism a work of our own merit? No. We simply must submit to the will of God. Now, how can anyone deny the necessity of baptism?

Collegevue Electronic Beacon

Genesis and Your Identity

Joshua Welch

Our culture's separation from the Biblical account of creation revealed in Genesis has resulted in mass confusion and deception. We have lost touch with our identity on a fundamental level. We misunderstand God, ourselves, our roles, and our purpose. If we want the clarity and simplicity that comes from God we must return to these Biblical roots and begin to see ourselves as God created us, sees us, and defines us. Consider some basic principles with regard to our identity found in the Genesis account.

1) God Made You. Genesis 1:26 says, "Then God said, 'Let Us make man...' The following verse declares, "So God created man..." If we deny our Creator, then we will deny all of the principles which follow in the Creator/creation relationship. In Romans 1, when the "incorruptible God" was "made like a corruptible man" then people were said to have "exchanged the truth of God for the lie, and worshiped and served the creature rather than the Creator" (Romans 1:23-25). Our misunderstanding about God has consequences. Isaiah understood it well as he wrote, "But now, O Lord, You are our Father; We are the clay, and You our potter; And all we are the work of Your hand" (Isaiah 64:8, NKJV).

2) God Made You Like Him. God did not just make "man" as He did all of the other animals, but He wanted to "make man in Our image" (Genesis 1:26). So, "in the image of God He created them..." (1:27, NKJV). Rather than leading us to believe we have descended from the animals, this distinguishes us from the order of animals. The spiritual nature of man makes us different. Zechariah would say "the Lord...stretches out the heavens...lays the foundation of the earth, and forms the spirit of man within him..." (Zechariah 12:1). Paul distinguishes the "inner man" from the "outer man" in 2 Corinthians 4:16. God made man a spiritual being and at death "the spirit will return to God who gave it" (Ecclesiastes 12:7).

3) God Defined You. Gender, to God, was not a role to be chosen but is a God-defined identity given to us through the natural order of God's creation. Genesis 1:27 reveals two genders: "male and female." Jesus reiterates this basic fact as He says God "at the beginning made them male and female" (Matthew 19:4). Our gender and gender roles, then, are not the product of fictional fantasy but grounded in the anatomy of fleshly facts. There is no playing "make-believe" with regard to our gender. Based upon the order of creation, God has defined our gender roles and provided a basis for the institution of marriage and a groundwork for sexual morality and fulfillment (Genesis 2:22-25).

4) God Made You the Pinnacle of Creation. In the Genesis account, God was not content with just the rocks, water, plants, fish, fowl, and beasts. His creative work was not finished until He created and purposed man and woman (Genesis 2). Thus, as God's special creation, we ought to realize the great value He places upon every soul. In Matthew 6 Jesus argues from the lesser to the greater as He reassures His audience that if God cares about "the birds of the air" and "the lilies of the field." Then, He asks, "Are you not of more value than they?" God certainly cares for us (Matthew 6:25-30).

5) God Loves Us So Much He Sent His Son to Redeem His Lost Creation (Acts 17:24-31). Throughout history, man has been guilty of this fundamental shift away from the Creator. Historically, we begin our downward spiral by misunderstanding the true nature of God. This, consequently, leads to a misunderstanding concerning our true nature, identity, and roles. As we lose our foundational moorings we begin to distance ourselves from the real purpose of God's creation. In doing so, we begin to act no different than the animals—just living for the most basic impulses of self-gratification in living out our fleshly desires. As we begin to live far away from God, we sin and are lost. Thankfully, God knew "from the beginning of the ages" we would fall and how He would redeem us "according to His eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Ephesians 3:9-11). Within each of us is this intrinsic desire to "seek the Lord" and "grope for Him and find Him" as we realize we were made for much more than these carnal, animalistic purposes (Acts 17:24-28). God has "put eternity in" our "hearts" (Ecclesiastes 3:11). As we seek, we learn through cross-centered preaching God has made a way for forgiveness and, thus, redemption and restoration. He does so through Jesus Christ and proves His redeeming ability "by raising Him from the dead" (Acts 17:32). But, there is a condition for all of created mankind. Acts 17:30 says, "Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent..." Change your mind about God, your identity, your purpose and goals. Change your life as you live for your Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ who came to redeem you. You've given up your God-given identity. He offers it back through Jesus!

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