

Treasure Should Not Be Trite [concluded]

by Bill Crews

. . . cease living in sin. And one's repentance in becoming a Christian will and should affect the rest of his life. He has died to sin (Romans 6:1-2). He will present himself unto God and the members of his fleshly body as instruments of righteousness; he will thenceforth not allow sin to reign in his mortal body (Rom. 6: 11-13). Friend, when you became a Christian, did you, as we sing in the song, "repent, fully repent"?

No one can become a Christian without confessing his faith in Christ. "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:10; vs. 9 speaks of confessing with the mouth "Jesus as Lord"). When the Ethiopian nobleman, upon hearing Jesus preached unto him by Philip, expressed a desire to be baptized, even asking, "what doth hinder me to be baptized?," he was told by Philip, "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." He then "answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God" (Acts 8:35-38). That confession is to be made without shame or fear, and after one becomes a Christian, he should continue to confess before men, even to his own condemnation and death, Jesus as His Lord (Matt. 10:24-33; 1 Tim. 6:12; Rev. 2:10). A Christian will endeavor, by example and teaching, to bring about such faith in others that they, too, will gladly confess Jesus.

No one can be saved without being baptized in obedience to Christ. In the New Testament antecedents or prerequisites of baptism are clearly: Hearing and believing (Mk. 16:15-16; 18:8), receiving the word and repenting (Acts 2:37-38, 41), hearing the word and confessing faith (Acts 8:35-38), being commanded to be baptized (Acts 10:48; 22: 16; 9: 18). In the New Testament these come after baptism: salvation (Mk. 16: 16), discipleship (Matt. 28:19), remission of sins (Acts 2:38), washing away of sins (Acts 22:16), being in Christ and putting on Christ (Gal. 3:26-27; Rom. 6:3-4). Baptism is a command of Christ (Matt. 28:19; Acts 2:38; 10:48), and one's baptism ought to mark the beginning of a life spent in obedience to Christ. One is not simply obeying a command of Christ; he is also yielding the rest of his life in loving obedience to the Lord and Savior Who died for his sins.

"The plan of salvation," "the steps into Christ," hearing the gospel, believing in Christ, repenting of one's sins, confessing faith in Christ, and being baptized ought to suggest to us the same things as these passages: Matthew 16:24 ("If any man would come unto me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and come follow me."); Matthew 10:37-38 ("He that loveth father or mother more than me is not worthy of me; and he that loveth son or daughter more than me is not worthy of me. And he that doth not take his cross and follow after me, is not worthy of me."); Matthew 7:21 ("Not everyone that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father who is in heaven."). Henceforth, may hearing, believing, repenting, confessing, and being baptized mean more, much more to any of you who profess to be Christians.

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