



THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

By Brett Hickey

Some Bible students insist one must choose between 1) following the example of the thief on the cross in being saved without baptism, or, 2) obeying the Scriptures that teach forgiveness is obtained by the baptism of penitent believers. This false dilemma rests on two faulty assumptions: 1) that the thief on the cross was never baptized, and, 2) that men and women today are offered the same teaching on salvation that Jesus presented to the thief.

Neither Jesus nor the thief said the thief had not been baptized. The assumption the thief was not baptized fails to account for the large number of Jews baptized during the ministry of Jesus and John. Another factor may be the greater emphasis on baptism in the name of Jesus after the cross. Although John's preaching was overshadowed by Jesus' ministry, John had considerable influence on the Jewish people. In fact, Jesus said there was no greater prophet (Luke 7:28). This is quite a commendation considering the work of Moses, Elijah, Isaiah, Jeremiah and Daniel.

Aware of John's mission as a forerunner to Christ, many people lose sight of how widely and how well John's teaching was received. Matthew 3:5-6, "Then Jerusalem, all Judea, and all the region around the Jordan went out to him [John] and were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins." Matthew used hyperbole here; not everyone was baptized by John (Luke 7:29-30).

Nevertheless, McGarvey suggests Matthew's description accounted for a million Jewish baptisms. Add the larger number of Jews baptized by Jesus' disciples (John 4:1-3) and there is little merit in concluding the thief was never

Newsletter

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baptized. The thief's recognition that Jesus was on the verge of establishing His kingdom (Luke 23:42) despite Jesus' then-present humiliating circumstances is evidence the thief had previously heard the preaching of John, Jesus, or both.

Another serious oversight by those who deny the Scriptures teach baptism for the forgiveness of sins is the anachronistic conclusion that the thief was under the same covenant as sinners today. The thief was forgiven by Jesus under the Mosaic covenant, not the new covenant; the thief lived under the Law of Moses, not the law of Christ. The thief lived during a time when God's people were obligated to be circumcised, keep the Sabbath, offer animal sacrifices, and maintain Jewish dietary restrictions

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October TV Broadcast Schedule

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Reasons Baptism is Essential (Part 1)

10/23

Sermon #1066

Reasons Baptism is Essential (Part 2)

10/30

Sermon #1067

Oh, How Much God Loves You!

to demonstrate faith and obedience to God. We live on this side of the cross.

The Holy Spirit pinpoints in Hebrews 9:15-17 when the transition from the old covenant to the new covenant took place. The argument is simple. Jesus is the Mediator of the new covenant and the testator of the New Testament. Scripture says plainly a testament does not go into effect until the testator dies. Since Jesus' conversation with the thief took place before Jesus' death, the assurance Jesus offered was under the Old Testament. We cannot be saved in the Christian era the same way people were saved under the Law of Moses.

Also, it was impossible for the thief to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ; no one could submit to this baptism until after Jesus issued it following His resurrection (Matthew 28:19). We live under the New Testament and must obey Jesus' command to be baptized (Matthew 28:19; Mark 16:16; John 3:5). It is clear first century Christians understood this truth (Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Galatians 3:27; Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 3:20-21).



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Upcoming Gospel Meetings

October 7-9

Bankhead CHURCH OF CHRIST

2610 East Bankhead Drive

Weatherford, TX

Speaker: Jerry Dickinson

7:30 pm (7th)

6:00 pm (8th)

10:30 am & 2:00 PM (9th)

October 21-23

Denton County CHURCH OF CHRIST

1305 S. Business State Hwy 121, Suite 105

Lewisville, TX

Speakers: Clint DeFrance, Marcus Mathis, Juan Rodriguez III

7:30 pm (21st)

6:00 pm (22nd)

10:30 am & 2:00 pm (23rd)

We support Brett Hickey's message, and the truths taught in the Bible for all mankind. We assist bringing this TV program to the north Texas area, and are glad you have watched the program! We would like you to visit any of our worship services!

Allen

East Allen CHURCH OF CHRIST

1008 E. Exchange Parkway

Allen, TX 75002

Arlington

CHURCH OF CHRIST on Green Oaks

4601 S. W. Green Oaks Blvd.

Arlington, TX 76017

Bridgeport

East Mound CHURCH OF CHRIST

Highway 2123, 1.5 miles south of town

Bridgeport, TX 76426

Canton

Phalba CHURCH OF CHRIST

Hwy 198 between Maybank & Canton at

Hwy 316 intersection

Phalba, TX 75124

Cleburne

South Walnut CHURCH OF CHRIST

306 South Walnut Street

Cleburne, TX 76033

Dallas

Dallas CHURCH OF CHRIST

122 Carol Lane

Red Oak, TX 75154

Duncanville

Duncanville CHURCH OF CHRIST

1615 Stratford Lane

Duncanville, TX

Fort Worth

Fossil Creek CHURCH OF CHRIST

3517 North Beach Street

Fort Worth, TX 76111

Frisco

CHURCH OF CHRIST in Frisco

9201 North County Road

Frisco, TX 75034

Grapevine

CHURCH OF CHRIST in Grapevine

713 North Lucas Drive

Grapevine, TX 76051

Lewisville

Denton county CHURCH OF CHRIST

1305 S. Business State Highway 121, Suite 105

Lewisville, TX 75067

Mineral Wells

Mineral Wells CHURCH OF CHRIST

300 Southeast 15th Street

Mineral Wells, TX 76067

Paris

Paris CHURCH OF CHRIST

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Paris, TX

Rockwall

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NE corner of I-30 Frontage & Industrial Blvd

Rockwall, TX 75087

Weatherford

Bankhead Drive CHURCH OF CHRIST

2610 East Bankhead Drive

Weatherford, TX 76087