

**What Did They Know
Before Baptism?**

Some have said:

- “If they have to know everything about living the life of a Christian and how the church is organized and functions, no one can be saved.”
- “All they have to know is that Jesus saves when they are baptized.”
- “There is a difference between ‘gospel’ and ‘doctrine’. We accept one’s baptism on the basis of the gospel about Jesus and not on doctrine about the church.”
- “Even though they were part of a denomination when they came to us, we have to accept their word that they were baptized for remission of sins.”

People believed what they heard from the gospel

➤ Rom 10:13-16, For “whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved. 14 How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach unless they are sent? As it is written: ‘How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the gospel of peace, who bring glad tidings of good things!’ 16 But they have not all obeyed the gospel. For Isaiah says, ‘Lord, who has believed our report?’ 17 So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Bible taken as a whole for good understanding

- 2 Tim 3:15-17, *“Holy Scriptures, which are able to make you wise for salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. 16 All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable ...that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work.”*
- Rom 15:4, *“For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope.”*
- Heb 8:6-7, 13, *“But now He has obtained a more excellent ministry, inasmuch as He is also Mediator of a better covenant, which was established on better promises. 7 For if that first covenant had been faultless, then no place would have been sought for a second.” 13 “In that He says, A new covenant, He has made the first obsolete. Now what is becoming obsolete and growing old is ready to vanish away.”*

Grand theme centers on two facts

- ***Blood atonement for sin through the death of Christ. Gen 3:15, Matt 26:28, Eph 1:7, Acts 2:38, Rom 6:3-4***
- ***Kingdom of prophecy and fulfillment always referred to the only church Jesus said He would build and save. Gen 49:10, Micah 5:2, Psa 45:6, w/ Heb 1:6-9, Col 1:13-14***

Sinners believed in Jesus and the kingdom

- Deut 18:18-19, *I will raise up for them a Prophet like you ...*
- Isa 9:6-7, *Child is born, ... government will be upon His shoulder.*
- Dan 7:13-14, *Son of Man... to Him was given...a kingdom*
- Acts 3:24, *all the prophets...have also foretold these days.*
- Matt 3, John preached the kingdom of heaven was at hand.
- Matt 4:17, 23, Jesus preached the gospel of the kingdom at hand.
- Matt 16:18-19, Jesus would build His church/kingdom.
- Mark 9:1, Disciples in Jesus' day would live to see the kingdom.

NT sinners believed in the kingdom and Christ

- Acts 2:14-47, 3000 on Pentecost.
- Acts 8:4-16, Philip in Samaria.
- Acts 8:26-40, Philip and the Ethiopian.
- Acts 9:1-19, Saul of Tarsus.
- “If one was baptized and became a part of a denomination, would he have to be baptized again?”
- NO! He would have to be baptized for the first time.
- Acts 19:1-6, Ephesian 12

What they understood and believed before baptism

- What was preached.
- What was preached was only one gospel of salvation through the blood of Christ.
- What was preached was only one baptism for the remission of sins to contact that blood.
- What was preached was salvation found only in one church or kingdom whose head and king is Christ.

Preaching today

- You cannot preach about faith in Jesus without preaching faith in His kingdom.
- You cannot preach about His kingdom without preaching the one church.
- You cannot preach about the one church without preaching about how to be added to that church.
- You cannot preach about how to be added to the church without preaching baptism into the death and blood of Christ for the remission of sins.
- One cannot have the right kind of faith without having the right information regarding salvation.
- One cannot fully believe in Jesus without believing in the church for which He died.

There is only one church

- Col 1:18, 24, *And He (Christ) is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the firstborn from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence....24 I now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up in my flesh what is lacking in the afflictions of Christ, for the sake of His body, which is the church,*
- Eph 1:22-23, *And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.*
- Eph 4:4, *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;*
- Eph 5:23, *For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.*

There is only one church

- 1 Cor 12:13-14, 20, *For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.... 20 But now indeed there are many members, yet one body.*
- A local group of that one body is called a church of Christ, Rom 16:16, *“Greet one another with a holy kiss. The churches of Christ greet you.”*

Conclusion

- Since the great theme of the Bible is about a Savior and His kingdom, then that is what one must believe before being baptized for remission of sins. The details of growing in that faith come along as one matures.
- John 16:13, *However, when He, the Spirit of truth, has come, He will guide you into all truth; for He will not speak on His own authority, but whatever He hears He will speak; and He will tell you things to come.*
- 2 Pet 3:17-18, *You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; 18 but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.*

