

## If Jesus were to return today . . .

as He has promised that He will someday, are you absolutely certain that you would spend eternity with Him in Heaven?

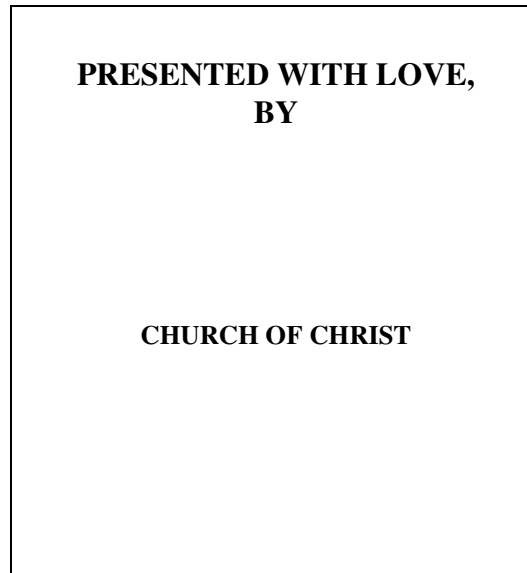
The Bible teaches that the only way to God is through His Son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6), and that the only way to be saved is to obey Him (Hebrews 5:8-9).

A willingness to do what God has instructed us to do is an indicator of true, living, active, and actual Biblical faith (James 2:17-18), and not a passive, dead, "faith only" that is common to demons and by which no one can be justified (James 2:19-26).

Compare what the following scriptures teach with your current condition and mark the responses that are appropriate to you.

Please contact us if you have questions, comments, or requests. It is our prayer that God will richly bless and reward your search for truth with a closer, fuller, and more blessed relationship with Him.

	<i>Yes</i>	<i>No</i>
I will hear Jesus Matthew 17:5; Jn. 6:68-69; 14:15	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will believe Him John 3:36; 8:24; Luke 6:46	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will repent of sin Acts 17:30-31; 2 Corinthians 7:10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will confess Christ Acts 8:37; Rom. 10:8-10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will be baptized Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 41; Rom. 6:3-6; Gal. 3:26-27	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I will be faithful to Christ John 14:15, 21, 23-24; 1 Timothy 6:12; 2 Timothy 4:6-8; Rev. 2:10	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



## Baptism and the Remission of Sins



A Brief Bible Study  
by Randall F. Matheny

There is little debate (although there is much disagreement over definitions) over the importance of faith, confession, and repentance in salvation from sin. There has long been much debate over the role of baptism.

According to much of the religious world baptism is merely an outward sign of an inward grace; a symbol of salvation which has already been attained either by faith alone, or by grace alone, depending upon whether the disputant has been influenced more by Martin Luther or John Calvin. This view has caused contradictory teachings which, while acknowledging that baptism as a command, deny its necessity by reducing it to a useless work of human merit, concluding that obedience to a divine command is not necessary to salvation. Let us understand that one who refuses a command of Christ is not His friend (John 14:15), does not love Him (John 14:15, 23-24), and will be judged by Him (John 12:48). What does the Bible teach regarding baptism?

The forerunner of the Christ, John the Immerser, taught and administered "the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins (Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3)." In both Mark's and Luke's record, baptism and remission of sins are connected by the Greek preposition *eis*, meaning, "into, unto, to, towards, for, among," depending upon its context, requiring that repentance and baptism precede the remission of sins. John's practice was twice acknowledged by Paul (Acts 13:24; 19:4). Under the guidance of the Holy Spirit, Peter

preached the same solution for sins (Acts 2:38), adding that repentance and baptism are requirements for every person who would enjoy remission of sins and receive the gift of the Holy Spirit, and that both were in the name of (meaning by the authority of) Jesus Christ. The same Greek preposition used by Mark and Luke, *eis*, connects baptism and the

**Clearly, the Bible teaches that, regarding the remission of sins, repentance must precede baptism for either to be valid, and that repentance and baptism precede the remission of sins. It takes a gross distortion of the words of the Lord to conclude otherwise.**

remission of sins, making it impossible for remission of sins to occur before baptism. Additionally, the commands of repentance and baptism are connected by the Greek conjunction *kai*, meaning, "and, also, but, even; that is, namely; both, and, not only, but also," depending upon its context. Clearly, the Bible teaches that, regarding the remission of sins, repentance must precede baptism for either to be valid, and that repentance and baptism precede the remission of sins. It takes a gross distortion of the words of the Lord to conclude otherwise.

Let's consider another example. When the Lord Jesus was instituting the memorial by which He would be remembered by His faithful disciples until He comes

again (Matthew 26:28), He said, "For this is My blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." The phrase, "for the remission of sins" is identical to the phrase Peter used in Acts 2:38 in the Greek language and in most translations. Clearly, the Lord Jesus is stating that His blood would be shed in order to bring about the remission of sins, and not because sins had already been remitted, and people had already been saved. Similarly, if we are to be honest and faithful to the words of the Holy Spirit, we must conclude that we are baptized in order to bring about the remission of sins and not because they are already forgiven.

How does baptism relate to the shedding of the Lord's blood? Paul wrote, "Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. For he who has died has been freed from sin." (Rom. 6:3-7). We are saved by the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ when we are buried with Him by baptism into His death. Have you been baptized for the remission of sins? If not, will you be?