

**240331-1 1Co 1, 17, Paul's Preaching of Christ Takes Precedence to Baptism—
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Paul, a God-called apostle of Jesus Christ, sent this letter greeting the God-called saints of the church at Corinth. Both *callings* appear to be with reference to the special functions of each, Paul as an apostle, and the baptized believers as *saints*. (Saints always has reference to those involved in the holy services of the church of Jesus Christ.) Paul thanked God that by Jesus Christ they were enriched in all utterance and knowledge. He said that God is faithful to continue to enrich them so that they come behind in no gift, to be preserved blameless to the end in the day of Jesus Christ.

But, these things being said, Paul had received report from a reliable source, the house of Chloe, that they had ALL become schismatic. The church had divided, some to Paul, some to Apollos, some to Peter, and some to Christ. In every case this division is against Christ. Division of this sort withdraws love and fellowship from the others. It was this very kind of schism that Paul had hoped them to avoid by deferring to personally administer baptism to others, except as necessity dictated. (This might have been his practice wherever he was. This practice could well have been by all of the apostles. (cf. 1Co.10.48, Peter commanded *them that believed* of Cornelius' house to be baptized, but we don't know who administered this baptism.) Regardless of Paul's attempt to avoid this kind of a schism the Corinthian church divided anyway, when they should have been agreed and perfectly joined together in the same mind and judgment. But before dealing with this issue directly, Paul expounds on the gospel's precedence to administering baptism.

**17 ¶ For Christ sent me not to baptize, but to *preach the gospel:*
to evangelize
'to be a good messenger of God's wisdom'**

preach the gospel, εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, pres. infin. mid. of the verb
εὐαγγελίζω, εὖ well + ἄγγελος, angel, messenger; εὐαγγελίζω
tss. *to shew glad tidings, to declare glad tidings, to declare, to
preach, to preach the gospel.*

For – connecting the previous thought. The reason Paul baptized none but these very few of the believing at the city of Corinth, is because *Christ* didn't send him to baptize, but to preach the gospel.

There is no doubt in my mind that the apostle Paul would not leave a newly born-again, converted-to-Christ-believer unbaptized. Absolutely not. He demonstrated that here at Corinth because he arrived alone; Luke, Silas, and Timothy evidently still at Berea. When Crispus, Gaius, and the house of Stephanus believed he immediately baptized them. But whenever anyone came to faith in Christ the believing were always baptized, though he did not administer it with his own hands. It was so for the confessions of faith by Lydia (Ac.16.15), the jailer at Philippi (Ac.16.33), the many of Corinth (Ac.18.8), and all the churches of Syria, Cilicia, Asia, Macedonia, and Achaia.

But this separates the preaching of the gospel from the administration of baptism. So should there be a distinction made between one's profession of faith in Christ and his being baptized. Preaching the gospel of Christ takes precedence over the administration of baptism. Faith must take precedence to baptism. Thus the term '*believer's baptism.*' One is baptized because of his faith. Never is one baptized to be made a Christian. (believer). Notice the order: faith (which manifests by repentance), then baptism.

Ac 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, 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.

Baptism is not for the unbelieving. Baptism neither regenerates nor saves the soul. One must first come to faith by Christ. And the only way to come to believe in the Lord Jesus is to hear the good news about Him. One must come to the place where, because he has been born again, that under the sound of the gospel he knows he's a sinner and he sees the Lord Jesus as his all-sufficient sacrifice to God for his sins. The sinner's response to the gospel is repentance. He turns from his former, Christless manner of life in sin and turns in trust to Christ. And so will be the rest of his life, trusting in Christ. Apart from the outward manifestation (fruit) of repentance baptism

should never be administered. John the Baptist refused to baptize to those that had failed to show forth the evidence of repentance.

Mt 3:7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?

8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:

9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to [our] father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham.

Baptism does not save the soul from sin. Otherwise, John should have gladly baptized the Pharisees and Sadducees, but he didn't.

The many subsequent Bible versions to the KJV have resurrected certain old, corrupt heresies of the apostate churches in Egypt into their texts. These versions cast doubt upon the last twelve verses of the gospel of Mark which contains one of the clearest texts of Scripture that sets aside the false notion of baptismal regeneration.

Mk.16.16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned. (It does not say, he that believeth and is not baptized shall be damned.)

So, Peter writes,

1Pe 3:21 The like figure whereunto [even] baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God, [there is no sin-cleansing power by baptism]) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ ...

We do not deny the importance of baptism. It has its place. But it is subordinate to the preaching of the gospel and a profession of one's faith in Christ. After all, there can be no disciple apart from faith, baptism and coming into the fellowship of a NT church to be taught Christ's doctrine. So, as the preaching of the gospel is separate from and prior to applying the

ordinance of baptism, so one's profession of faith is separate from and prior to being baptized.

(How the gospel was to be preached ...)

not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of none effect.

ἐν, by

in order that

– emptied, voided –
vain

should be made of none effect, κενωθῆ, 3s. aor. subj. pass. of the verb κενόω, tss. to be without reputation, to make void, to make of none effect, to be in vain.

to preach, εὐαγγελίζεσθαι, pres. infin. mid. of the verb εὐαγγελίζω –

Here it could be translated **literally, to evangelize**, or to 'announce well, that which concerns the Son of God. Evangelizing is 'to give the good news of Jesus Christ.

In v.21, *the preaching*, is tss. from the Gr. noun κήρυγμα. The Gr. verb κηρύσσω, is tss. *to preach*. The gospel is a *declaration* of Christ's death, burial and resurrection. The gospel is declared rather than offered. The Lord Jesus is declared to be the Savior of all them that believe. (cf. 1Co.1.21)

Notice the declaration: (another Greek verb):

Ac 8:33 (Philip to the Ethiopian eunuch.) In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare (διηγέομαι, διά + ἡγέομαι, guide or lead through) his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. (Those that will preach the gospel lead and guide others to the Lord Jesus.)

...

35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached (evangelized, gave the good new) unto him Jesus.

Knowing what we understand that the word of God teaches about the saving of a soul let me give this analogy.

Picture a very, dark room (pitch black) that is filled with two kinds of people, they're both blind in this darkness, but one can see and the other cannot. Then suddenly someone comes and turns on the light. What did the light do? Did it *give* sight to the blind? No. The one that cannot see is still blind, but the light revealed who has the seeing eyes from the one one that does not. Until the light came on there was no perceptible difference between the two in this room. The light shined in the darkness.

*2Co.4.3 But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:
4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.
5 For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus' sake.
6 For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to [give] the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.*

So, this idea applies to how the preaching of the gospel works. There are only two kinds of people in the earth: the reprobate and the elect. These are all together in the earth.

Mt 13:30 Let both grow together until the harvest ...

When the gospel is preached, the preacher, you and I, cast an indiscriminate light on everyone, but it beam shines directly into the hearts of some. Why? Because God has brought them to life, He has opened the spiritual eyes of their understanding, He has opened the spiritual hearing so that they might hear.

Mt 11:15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.

Joh 5:24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that heareth my word, and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation; but is passed from death unto life.

The rest of them remain in darkness, even though their ears might have heard the audible sounds of the gospel declared. But when the elect is bought to life they hear the gospel and believe in Christ to the saving of the soul. They come to the Light; they all come to faith in Jesus Christ. THE GOSPEL DOES NOT GIVE SIGHT TO THE BLIND. THE GOSPEL DOES NOT OPEN THE EARS. THE GOSPEL DOES NOT RAISE THE DEAD IN SINS TO LIFE. IT DOES NOT IMPART LIFE.

Look at the text of Lk.4.18, 19. What does it say? This text says that there was one purpose for anointing the Lord Jesus and four purposes for sending Him.

Lk.4.18 The Spirit of the Lord [is] upon me, because he (the Father) HATH ANOINTED me (purpose for anointing) to preach the gospel to the poor; he HATH SENT me (first purpose) to heal the brokenhearted, (second purpose) to preach (proclaim) deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, (third purpose) to set at liberty them that are bruised, 19 (fourth purpose) To preach (proclaim) the acceptable year of the Lord.

Christ was certainly anointed to evangelize, but He was also sent to do these other great works among men. We should be careful about what we attach to the proclamation of the gospel. THE GOSPEL MANIFESTS PREREQUISITE LIFE.

Joh 3:20 For every one that doeth evil hateth the light, neither cometh to the light, lest his deeds should be reproved. 21 But he that doeth truth cometh to the light, that his deeds may be made manifest, that they are wrought in God.

Joh 3:36 He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him.

Joh 6:47 Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life.

Paul tells us precisely what the gospel does. It shines a light upon them that have life.

2Ti.1.9 Who (God) hath saved us, and called [us] with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which (purpose and grace) was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began,

10 But (which purpose and grace from eternity) is now made manifest by the appearing of our Saviour Jesus Christ, who hath abolished death, and (our Saviour Jesus Christ) hath brought life and immortality (deathlessness) to light through the gospel: (The gospel manifests everlasting life and deathlessness!)

11 Whereunto I am appointed a preacher, and an apostle, and a teacher of the Gentiles.

The reality of the presence of everlasting life is proved by the declaration of the gospel. Those that have life, when they hear the gospel of Christ, *believe it.*

Ro 10:17 So then faith [cometh] by (ἐκ, from) hearing, and hearing by (διὰ, through or by means of) the word (ῥῆμα) of God. (This text states that faith comes as a result of opened ears. Opened ears comes through means of God's direct word of command to be opened. The Bible does not teach gospel regeneration.

Regeneration, the new birth is not through means of the gospel. It is through an immediate act of God: Ears be opened! Mk.7.34 And looking up to heaven, he sighed, and saith unto him, Ephphatha, that is, Be opened. 35 And straightway his ears were opened ...)

The gospel, and subsequent faith, proves whether there is life. This one can see, and hear, and believe the good news of all that the Lord Jesus has done for them by His death, burial, and resurrection. Because there was a previous spiritual resurrection, a new birth, regeneration he can understand what God has done for him by His only Son, the Lord Jesus. So the gospel brings about CONVERSION, a turning from sin and the world to faith in Christ. Otherwise, the sinner, in his spiritually dead state cannot

understand the goodness of the gospel so that he might believe. Rather, he is repulsed by it. He hates it, and will not come to Christ because his works condemn him.

not with wisdom of words – The gospel is not a matter of being persuasive. Paul did not preach the gospel by wisdom of words. He wasn't attempting to convert men to Christ by appealing to their intellect as if the gospel was within the grasp of human reason: if only I could preach it just right.

Ac 26:28 Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian. (To almost be persuaded is not to be persuaded at all.)

The gospel is a declaration of God's wisdom and not the wisdom of men. The gospel is certainly reasonable and logical, but only to them that have a new mind. Otherwise, the gospel is foolishness to the natural mind, to those that are yet dead in trespasses and sins.

1Co 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know [them], because they are spiritually discerned.

1Co 1:18 For the preaching of the cross is to them that perish foolishness; but unto us which are saved it is the power of God.

1Co 1:21 For after that in the wisdom of God the world by wisdom knew not God, it pleased God by the foolishness of preaching to save them that believe.

Whether we declare the gospel of Christ in great detail or in simplest of terms it can only be apprehended by spiritual minds.

1Co 2:15 But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man.

The simple statement of the gospel could be like this: That Christ, the Son of God came, presented Himself in behalf of His people to be an acceptable sin offering to satisfy God for their sin-debt; the sinless Son of God treated

as if He was the transgressor, nailed to the cross, died, was buried, and after three days and nights in the tomb raised Him to life for evermore. And every soul that understands that Christ did this for them has life everlasting.

1Co.2.1 ¶ And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God.

...

4 And my speech and my preaching [was] not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power:

5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Paul emphasizes the importance of the gospel over the administration of baptism. Baptism does not to put away sins. It is the convert's first open declaration faith in him. Baptism is a type, picture, symbol of Christ's resurrection from the dead, by which resurrection we have been saved.

To be sure that we understand this, the new birth (regeneration, the bestowal of everlasting life) precedes one's ability to comprehend the spiritual message of the gospel. The declaration of the gospel CONVERTS (turns) the new-born soul to trust in the Lord Jesus. AFTER THESE THINGS HAVE BEEN PROVED, THEN BAPTISM MAY BE APPLIED.

17 οὐ γὰρ ἀπέστειλὲν με Χριστὸς βαπτίζειν ἀλλ' εὐαγγελίζεσθαι οὐκ ἐν σοφίᾳ λόγου ἵνα μὴ κενωθῇ ὁ σταυρὸς τοῦ Χριστοῦ