

Message Main Idea

God saves by grace through faith for anyone who will believe. Salvation depends on God's power through the gospel, yet He uses human instruments to deliver and embody it. We should rejoice any time someone confesses Christ and immediately lead them into obedience to Jesus' teachings. This is how we make disciples.

Explanation & Discussion

Summary: Now that Peter understood that the gospel was for all people, he proceeded to share the good news of Christ with those who were assembled. He clearly shared the life death and resurrection of Jesus, the Great Commission, the coming judgment, and the blessing of forgiveness through faith in Jesus. The Gentiles believed and were filled with the Spirit while Peter was still preaching. He immediately administered baptism and remained with them for a while. When he returned to Jerusalem, he was confronted by other Jews because he had fellowship with Gentiles. Peter recounted the story and demonstrated that God saved the Gentiles just like the Jews. Those present glorified God.

The way the Gentiles were saved is an amazing account. What did Peter do? How did they come to repentance and faith? Why did Peter need to be there? How does this encourage us in witnessing encounters?

What is the difference between Spirit baptism and water baptism? What is the connection between the two?

When a young child requests baptism, how would you discuss that with the child? What concerns are raised if we move too fast or too slow?

Many Christians go their whole lives without sharing the gospel with another soul. Why do you think that is? How do you think God views this response to His grace? How can we encourage believers to share Jesus?

As Baptists, believer's baptism is a major distinctive of our doctrine. Should we relax baptism requirements for those who want to join but do not want to be baptized? Is infant baptism sufficient to join the church? Why?

If a person is unable to receive baptism by immersion due to health, disability, or other physical hindrances, how should the church respond? If a person refuses baptism by immersion due to fear of water, fear of being the center of attention or other apprehension, how should the church respond?

The picture of baptism from John the Baptist, Jesus' disciples, Philip, and Romans 6:4, all indicate baptism by immersion. How important is that practice? Are there times that pouring might be an acceptable mode of baptism? Explain.

What should be our response when anyone professes Christ? Should we require a period of time before baptism to see if their fruit matches their profession? Why?

How would you respond to a Christian who believes that Christians of different ethnicities should not fellowship? How might you approach an elderly believer who holds prejudice views toward other people? How could diversity of age, ethnicity and economic level strengthen a church's witness?

How can resting in God's sovereignty give the church greater confidence in sharing the gospel?

Why must people hear and understand the bad news before they can truly receive the good news? Should we attempt to impress it on them, or should we leave it to the Holy Spirit? Why?

Some say that speaking in tongues is the sign of receiving the Holy Spirit. How would you refute this biblically?

Additional References

Acts 13:48 ⁴⁸ And when the Gentiles heard this, they began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to eternal life believed.

Jonah 3:4-5, 10 ⁴ Jonah began to go into the city, going a day's journey. And he called out, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" ⁵ And the people of Nineveh believed God. They called for a fast and put on sackcloth, from the greatest of them to the least of them. ¹⁰ When God saw what they did, how they turned from their evil way, God relented of the disaster that he had said he would do to them, and he did not do it.

John 1:12-13 ¹² But to all who did receive him, who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God, ¹³ who were born, not of blood nor of the will of the flesh nor of the will of man, but of God.

Isaiah 61:10 ¹⁰ I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; my soul shall exult in my God, for he has clothed me with the garments of salvation; he has covered me with the robe of righteousness.

Acts 2:38 ³⁸ And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 8:12 ¹² But when they believed Philip as he preached good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women.

Acts 8:36-38 ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him.

Romans 6:4 ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.

1st Corinthians 12:13 ¹³ For in one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—Jews or Greeks, slaves or free—and all were made to drink of one Spirit.

Isaiah 43:10-12 ¹⁰ "You are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and my servant whom I have chosen, that you may know and believe me and understand that I am he. Before me no god was formed, nor shall there be any after me. ¹¹ I, I am the Lord, and besides me there is no savior. ¹² I declared and saved and proclaimed, when there was no strange god among you; and you are my witnesses," declares the Lord, "and I am God.

Acts 16:30-34 ³⁰ After he brought them out, he said, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" ³¹ They said, "Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household." ³² And they spoke the word of the Lord to him together with all who were in his house. ³³ And he took them that very hour of the night and washed their wounds, and immediately he was baptized, he and all his household. ³⁴ And he brought them into his house and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, having believed in God with his whole household.

Thomas Schreiner "Baptism should not be given to those who have not received the Spirit, to those who have not died and risen with Christ, to those who have not trusted in Jesus for their salvation, and to those who have not been justified by faith so that they do not walk in newness of life."

Thomas Schreiner "Believer's Baptism is not essential for being an evangelical. We do not consider those who proclaim the gospel of justification by faith yet practice infant baptism to be heretics; we consider them brothers and sisters in the Lord. Still, it does not follow that the matter is unimportant."

Timothy George "Jesus took a special interest in children, received them into his arms, and blessed them. He did not baptize them."

John Piper "Missions is not the ultimate goal of the church. Worship is. Missions exists because worship doesn't."