

What is the importance of Christian Baptism?



FAIR QUESTIONS— HONEST ANSWERS

A man lies in the recovery room after serious, life-saving heart surgery. The surgeon walks into the room and gets down on his knees beside the bed. With tears in his eyes the doctor says, “Thank you! Thank you! Thank you! I can’t thank you enough for what you have done for me!”

There’s something backwards about that scene. Shouldn’t the patient be the one thanking the doctor? After all, that surgeon saved his life. The patient owes that medical man a huge debt of gratitude.

Many people get Christian Baptism backwards. They think that Baptism is something we do for God, a way of showing obedience to him. That seems appropriate. After all, parents are the ones who bring their children to the baptismal font. However, in Baptism God is really the one who does something for us.

And what wonderful things God does for us in Baptism! The apostle Peter said, “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 2:38). In those words Peter describes two of the

wondrous blessings of Baptism: the forgiveness of sins and the gift of the Holy Spirit.

“All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). We are all sinners. Sin separates us from God. Sin takes away the blessings he wants us to have. Sin keeps us out of heaven. So God did something about sin. He sent Jesus, his Son. Jesus lived perfectly in our place, died on the cross to pay for all our sins and rose again to assure us of eternal life. In Baptism, God gives us this forgiveness that Jesus won for us.

The other blessing, the gift of the Holy Spirit, is faith or trust in Jesus. Faith is the hand that receives all the blessings that Jesus won for us. In Baptism God miraculously works faith in our hearts so that we don’t miss out on a single blessing that Jesus won for us. Through faith worked in Baptism, God gives us all the blessings earned by our Savior: forgiveness of sins, a new life of peace and hope, and eternal life in heaven.

Is Baptism important? Absolutely! In Baptism God is at work for us. Through Baptism God saves us.

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