

Words of Truth & Reason

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CHURCH OF CHRIST—QUAIL VALLEY

“JUST AS I AM”

(BY FRANK HIMMELL)

The song “Just As I Am” is perhaps the most commonly used invitation song. The idea in the song is that we cannot make ourselves right with God on our own; apart from Jesus’ blood we have no hope. That is precisely the New Testament picture (Eph. 2:8-9; Titus 3:5; etc.).

I fear, however, that some folks have an erroneous idea about Jesus saving us “just as we are.” They seem to think that He saves us without any change in our conduct. That is opposite to the New Testament picture. Jesus’ charge to the apostles was “*that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in His name to all the nations*” (Luke 24:47). Forgiveness is extended to those willing to abandon sinful conduct, not to those who insist on continuing in it.

Paul wrote to the Corinthian Christians, “*Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor*

adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, will inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you...” (1 Cor. 6:9-10). He did not say such **are** some of you, but such **were**. They changed their conduct in connection with being washed, sanctified, and justified (v. 11).

“Just as I am,” if referring to our own helplessness, is a comforting sentiment. But to suggest it means salvation without repentance is to hold out false hope.

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BASICS OF BAPTISM

1. **Jesus’ blood washes us from sin in baptism** (Romans 6:3) We are baptized into Christ’s death. His death was the occasion when He offered His body and blood for the remission of sins (Matthew 26:28). His blood washes us when we are baptized into His death.

2. **Happens after belief** (Mark 16:16) God did not reveal “infant baptism.” Belief is before baptism.

3. **Means immersion** (Romans 6:4, *buried*) To be “baptized” by being sprinkled with water is like running by hopping. Running is not hopping, and baptism is not sprinkling. Baptism is a burial.

4. **In water** (Acts 8:38)

5. **For the remission of sins** (Acts 2:38; Matthew 26:28)

6. **Adds us to the church** [the saved] (1 Corinthians 12:13)

7. **Is a part of calling on the name of the Lord** (Acts 22:16) We cannot call upon the Lord for salvation by faith or words alone—it must include the one baptism.

8. **Saves us** (1 Peter 3:21) Have you been taught that baptism does not save us? Read Peter’s words!

THE THIEF ON THE CROSS & BAPTISM

After reading the article "Basics of Baptism," someone called and asked about the crucified thief saved by Jesus. This caller said "I just wondered where he had been baptized."

1. Many people today assume that the thief had never been baptized. Mark 1:5 says "And all the land of Judea... were all baptized..."--was the thief one of them? We cannot know, so it is vain to try to "prove a point" this way. I do not teach that baptism is essential "because the thief did it." Sadly, people today believe that baptism is not essential "because the thief didn't do it." That cannot be proved. Thus, it does not prove that baptism is not for the remission of sins today, as Acts 2:38 says it is.

2. Jesus' death established the new covenant (Matthew 26:28). When the thief spoke with Jesus, the new covenant was **not yet given** because Jesus had not yet died. The article above is a study of baptism under the new covenant.

3. Did the thief believe that God had raised Jesus from the dead? Of course not (Jesus had not yet died). Since the thief was saved without this belief, can you be saved without that belief? Of course not, but this is how some people view baptism.

Mark 16:16 has not changed-- *He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.* (Mark 16:16). If you want Jesus to save you, what did He say you must do?

"But why do you call Me 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do the things which I say?"

(Luke 6:46)

You are invited to:
Sunday AM
Bible classes: 10:00AM
Sunday AM Worship:
10:45AM
Sunday PM Worship:
5:00 PM
Wednesday Bible
Classes & Worship:
7:00 PM

DEBATE ABOUT JESUS & SALVATION

In January of 2010, Katherine Schori, presiding bishop of the US Episcopal Church, debated a fellow Episcopal bishop in Dallas, Tx. What difference in belief resulted in a debate? Whether or not Jesus is essential to salvation--and the "presiding bishop's" position was that Jesus is NOT essential!

When men create churches based upon man-made teachings, this is the result. By man's rules having a disbelieving, a female, or a never-married bishop is okay. Scripture says otherwise (1 Timothy 3:1-7). Does that matter to you?

Was Jesus ever the head (leader) of the Episcopal Church? Read the Bible learn how God identified the His church, who belongs to it, and how/when they belong to it. That is all we want to be—a church **of Christ**, people led by and belonging to Him. Why be more, why be less?

Questions from this month's articles:

1. Does God accept the thief or adulterer who refuse to leave their sin?
2. What two things are said to be "for the remission of sins"?
3. Did the thief on the cross confess that God had raised Jesus from the dead? Must we confess this?
4. Were the first Christians members of the Episcopal Church?

- * Mail your answers to church of Christ—Quail Valley 4104 East Harrison St, Batesville, AR 72501
- * OR, e-mail your answers to **TruthAndReason@suddenlink.net**
- * Do you have other Bible questions we can help you with? Write or call us (870 793-6700; 569-4491)
- * Visit our website **WWW.QVCOC.COM**