

July 24th, 2016

VIDEO: -OLOGY INTRO

SLIDE 1

INTRODUCTION

Good Morning! Welcome to Fox Valley Christian Church!

- Online Giving ... YouVersion Live and www.fvcc.com/give

Baptism. We love baptism around here. We get excited, we celebrate, we cheer. Why? Because Baptism is awesome, because Baptism is something that God has told us to do.

MATTHEW 28:18-20

SLIDE 2

¹⁸And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me.

SLIDE 3

¹⁹Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,

SLIDE 4

²⁰teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.

This is the mission, this is what we have been told to do. So when we baptize people ... we celebrate.

SLIDE 5

So today we are going to talk about baptism. Really, we are going to answer one question today. It is a question that might make some of you uncomfortable. That's okay. When we seek to know God and His truths for our life, it gets uncomfortable sometimes. That doesn't keep us from seeking.

Here's the question: **Is baptism a condition for salvation? Do you need to be baptized to be saved?**

This is a big question. This is a tough question. I want you to know that I did not just lazily come at this. There has been a tremendous amount of seeking, studying, and preparing.

So, here is how we are going to do this. We are not going to just jump in with a quick yes or no and then leave. We are going to break this down and walk through God's word as we seek our answer.

IS SALVATION CONDITIONAL?

So, the first question we must answer is, is salvation conditional? Because if salvation is unconditional ... then baptism obviously cannot be a condition for salvation. So, is salvation conditional?

I was preparing for VBS, writing the teachings times and small group times, and I came across this really awesome list.

Someone took the promises that Jesus made and put them in a list. They highlighted the promise in yellow and then in red they highlighted the condition for that promise. There were 84 promises and 64 of them had an immediate condition tied to them. Here is an example:

MATTHEW 7:7-8

SLIDE 6

⁷"Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you.

SLIDE 7

⁸For everyone who asks receives, and the one who seeks finds, and to the one who knocks it will be opened.

Do you want it to be given to you? Then ask. Do you want to find? Then seek. Do you want the door to be opened to you? Then knock.

These are conditions. Jesus says ... I have this for you ... but there are conditions. You have to seek, you have to ask, you have to knock There are conditions.

SLIDE 8

Remember a couple weeks ago we talked about the difference between conditions and works. Works are what you do in order to earn something, conditions are merely instructions as to how to get the free gift.

If we are giving out electricity here and we say, “do you want it? Then we need you to volunteer at VBS.” That would be you working for the electricity. It is no longer free then.

But, if we say, “Do you want it? Then you will need to have something to plug into the outlet, and it can’t be a foreign plug, and you actually have to go and plug it in.” Are you working for it? No. It’s still free. But if you want it ... this is how you get it.

Jesus says, “Do you want to find? Then you have to be looking.” You can’t find anything if you are not looking. It is the condition.

ISAIAH 65:1-2 (This is God speaking)

SLIDE 9

¹ I was ready to be sought by those who did not ask for me; I was ready to be found by those who did not seek me. I said, "Here I am, here I am," to a nation that was not called by my name.

SLIDE 10

² I spread out my hands all the day to a rebellious people, who walk in a way that is not good, following their own devices;

God is the one doing the calling here. God is the one seeking. God is the one jumping in our path, waving His arms, saying HERE I AM. This is what God does. He sincerely calls sinners to return to Him, but the sinner must answer the call.

ISAIAH 65:12

SLIDE 11

¹² I will destine you to the sword, and all of you shall bow down to the slaughter, because, when I called, you did not answer; when I spoke, you did not listen, but you did what was evil in my eyes and chose what I did not delight in."

God gave us free will. That makes our salvation conditional. God freely gives it to us, He stands in our path trying to get our attention so we will reach out and just take it. He is calling. But if we don't answer, if we don't respond, if we don't reach out ... we can never take hold of it.

SLIDE 12

It's free. We don't have to work for it. But since we have freewill, since we can choose, it is not unconditional.

Now, God's love for us is unconditional, but the free gift of salvation, it is conditional. It is offered to everyone, but not everyone will receive it.

WHAT ARE THE CONDITIONS THEN?

If salvation has conditions, then what are the conditions?

FAITH

The primary condition for receiving and retaining God's saving grace always has been and continues to be faith.

This was clearly stated as early as Abraham

GENESIS 15:6

SLIDE 13

⁶And he believed the Lord, and he counted it to him as righteousness.

It was his belief in the Lord, it was his faith, that was counted as righteousness.

This continues through the Old Testament and into the New.

JOHN 3:15-18

SLIDE 14

¹⁵that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.

SLIDE 15

¹⁶"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

SLIDE 16

¹⁷For God did not send his Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him.

SLIDE 17

¹⁸Whoever believes in him is not condemned, but whoever does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only Son of God.

Faith is the condition for eternal life. Faith leads to life. Faith leads us out of condemnation.

SLIDE 18

We hear that we are saved by our faith and we say, “well I believe there is a God, so I am all good right?” No. Demons believe there is a God, that doesn’t save them. Faith is more than just believing that there is a God.

There are really two aspects of saving faith, so I want to look at them really quick.

The first one is **BELIEF**. In biblical terminology the belief aspect of faith is represented by the phrase “believe that”.

HEBREWS 11:6

SLIDE 19

⁶And without faith it is impossible to please him, for whoever would draw near to God must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who seek him.

JOHN 8:24

SLIDE 20

²⁴I told you that you would die in your sins, for unless you believe that I am he you will die in your sins."

JOHN 20:31

SLIDE 21

³¹but these are written so that you may believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and that by believing you may have life in his name.

ROMANS 10:9

SLIDE 22

⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

Believe that ... He is God, He is who He said He is, He is the Christ, God raised Him from the dead, He is in God and God is in Him.

SLIDE 23

We are also told to believe Jesus' words, to believe all things written in the law and prophets, to believe the gospel, and to believe the truth.

That is the first aspect of faith. The second aspect of faith is **TRUST**. In biblical terminology the trust aspect of faith is represented in the phrase "believe in".

We are told to trust Jesus and trust His works.

JOHN 3:16

SLIDE 24

¹⁶"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only Son, that whoever believes in him should not perish but have eternal life.

ACTS 10:43

SLIDE 25

⁴³To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name."

It is one thing to believe that, it is another thing altogether to believe in. When we do both, we have true saving faith.

SLIDE 26

Faith is a condition for salvation. Why? Because we are not able to save ourselves. We can only be saved by accepting and relying on what Jesus has already done. **We have to believe that Jesus has done what was necessary to save us and we have to believe in Jesus, that He has the ability to save us.**

And when I say save us, I am talking about the double cure. He doesn't just save us from the penalty, He saves us from our sin now. He redeems us now. We don't just believe in His power to free us from our burden of punishment, we believe in His power in our lives right now to free us from the burden of sin, temptation, addiction. We have faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior.

REPENTANCE

But that is not the only condition to salvation. We also see that repentance is a condition to salvation.

Jesus Himself says:

LUKE 13:3

SLIDE 27

³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

When we look at repentance we see that:

- Sinner are called to repent

ACTS 17:30

SLIDE 28

³⁰The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,

- Repentance is linked to forgiveness of sins

ACTS 3:19

SLIDE 29

¹⁹Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out,

- Repentance leads to life

ACTS 11:18

SLIDE 30

¹⁸When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, "Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life."

- Repentance leads to salvation

2 CORINTHIANS 7:10

SLIDE 31

¹⁰For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

So what does it mean to repent. We see that we are supposed to repent and we see what repentance leads to, but what is it?

Repenting is a change of mind or a turning. It is when we turn from sin and when we turn to God. It is a mourning because of sin, a grief because of sin, and a sincere desire to turn away from sin and to turn to God.

SLIDE 32

God's Word shows that repentance, like faith is a condition for salvation. Why? The very nature of salvation requires it.

Salvation is a salvation from sin, and we cannot be saved from our sin while we are still holding onto it in our hearts. **When confronted with the gospel we must make a choice, sin or salvation. To accept salvation, we must turn our back on sin. To accept sin, we are turning our back on salvation.**

We cannot sincerely accept what Jesus did for us on the cross without hating the sin that put Him there.

CONFESSION

The third condition for salvation is confession. Specifically, a confession before the world of one's faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

MATTHEW 10:32-33

SLIDE 33

³²So everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven,

SLIDE 34

³³but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven.

ROMANS 10:9-10

SLIDE 35

⁹because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.

SLIDE 36

¹⁰For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.

Confession leads to salvation. So what is confession? What are we confessing?

Please do not confuse this with a confession of sins. That is not what this is. The word used for confession here means to agree, to say the same thing, or to acknowledge the truth about something.

Peter's confession in Matthew 16:16 is our model of confession

...

MATTHEW 16:16

SLIDE 37

¹⁶Simon Peter replied, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

He says ... you are the Christ, which means anointed one. He is saying you are king, you are priest, you are prophet ... you have been set apart for this specific work. You are Christ. And you are the Son of the living God. He was acknowledging Jesus' divinity here. He was acknowledging that Jesus is God.

We typically call this the "good confession," but did you know that we are actually told what the good confession is?

1 TIMOTHY 6:12-13

SLIDE 38

¹²Fight the good fight of the faith. Take hold of the eternal life to which you were called and about which you made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses.

SLIDE 39

¹³I charge you in the presence of God, who gives life to all things, and of Christ Jesus, who in his testimony before Pontius Pilate made the good confession,

Well ... what did Jesus say to Pilate? What was this good confession?

JOHN 18:36-37

SLIDE 40

³⁶Jesus answered, "My kingdom is not of this world. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world."

SLIDE 41

³⁷Then Pilate said to him, "So you are a king?" Jesus answered, "You say that I am a king. For this purpose I was born and for this purpose I have come into the world—to bear witness to the truth. Everyone who is of the truth listens to my voice."

Jesus is saying ... I am not of this world, I am God, and I am king. When we confess, we are confessing that Jesus is Lord, He is King, He is God.

SLIDE 42

God's Word tells us that confession leads to salvation, so why? Why is this a condition for salvation?

Because God wants us all in, He wants us to publically declare what is happening inside of us. We have faith ... we believe that Jesus is Lord and we believe in Him and His saving grace.

Because of this faith, we hate sin and we turn from it and turn to Jesus. But we do not do this privately, away from the world, we do this so that the world knows. We confess what we believe with our mouths. So that those who know us, know.

BAPTISM

Which leads us to baptism. Is it the fourth condition for salvation?

To understand this we need to know the meaning of baptism.

Some people believe that baptism causes salvation. That the baptismal water is holy and that this water has the power to

cleansing the soul from sin, or at least the power to convey that divine cleansing to the soul. So if you are baptized, you will be saved. This has to be rejected. If that were the case, I would not spend so much time helping you to understand what God is teaching us in His word. Instead, I would tell you to go and grab as many people as you can ... force them back here and dunk them in this water. Let's forcefully save the world.

Some would say that it is symbolic. It is just an external symbol of what is happening internally.

Some would say that it is psychological. It is for our benefit and nothing more.

I agree that it is both symbolic and psychological, but I also believe that something more is going on.

So, let's look at the Biblical evidence.

ACTS 2:38

SLIDE 43

³⁸And 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."

Remember, there is a double burden that sin causes. There is the penalty because of our sins and there is the spiritual weakness. Salvation is the double cure; forgiveness of sins and the power to overcome our sins now (through the Holy Spirit).

So immediately when we look at baptism we are being told that Baptism is specifically tied to salvation, both aspects of salvation.

According to Acts 2:38, baptism is the time that God has appointed for removing the sinner's guilt and for bestowing upon him the regenerating presence of the Holy Spirit.

Do you remember last week? Every instance of regeneration was linked to baptism. Again and again we were reading scriptures that linked regeneration with baptism. If you missed that, go back and check it out.

COLOSSIANS 2:12

SLIDE 44

¹²having been buried with him in baptism, in which you were also raised with him through faith in the powerful working of God, who raised him from the dead.

ROMANS 6:3-5

SLIDE 45

³Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?

SLIDE 46

⁴We 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.

SLIDE 47

⁵For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his.

TITUS 3:5

SLIDE 48

⁵he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit,

JOHN 3:5

SLIDE 49

⁵Jesus answered, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Verse after verse connects baptism with salvation. And I get it, there are arguments against baptism being a condition of salvation.

The guy on the cross next to Jesus wasn't baptized and Jesus saved Him, nobody in the Old Testament was baptized and Jesus saved them.

You are correct, but both of these also occurred prior to Jesus' death and resurrection. His death and resurrection changed everything. Baptism is now a condition of salvation.

1 PETER 3:21

SLIDE 50

²¹Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

MARK 16:16

SLIDE 51

¹⁶Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

There is a New Covenant and scripture after scripture tells us that God has specifically connected baptism to this new covenant.

SLIDE 52

Okay ... but would God really connect a physical act, like baptism, with a spiritual act, like salvation? Absolutely. You need look no further than the cross for your answer to that. Jesus' death was about as physical as you could get it, but without it we would not be saved.

If baptism is a condition of salvation, why do people believe otherwise?

They didn't always. Did you know that prior to the year 1500 baptism was viewed practically unanimously as the time when God bestowed the double cure of salvation? From the very beginning of church history. Well what changed?

Swiss reformer Huldreich Zwingli, in the years 1523-1525, opposed baptism as a condition for salvation. He said, "In this matter of baptism, all the doctors have been in error from the time of the apostles." Everyone has been wrong, all the way back to the apostles. Zwingli took baptism and made it nothing more than covenant sign (like circumcision). Something to show outwardly that this person has already be saved.

But from the beginning of the Church, baptism was taught as the time when the double cure was bestowed, was given. We then look at scripture and we see in God's word that there is an intense connection between baptism and both aspects of the cure. Baptism now saves you, baptism is part of the condition for salvation. Not that baptism in and of itself has power, not that faith in and of itself has power, not that repentance in and of itself has power, not that confession in and of itself has power ... Jesus' blood is the only thing that has the power to save us.

Jesus saves.

But when we go to God's Word, we see that there are conditions. Do you want this free gift?

- Then you need to believe that I am Lord and believe in me as Savior.
- Then you need to turn from your sins and turn back to me
- Then you need to make your decision known publically
- Then like me, you need to washed with both water and spirit, and I will make you new

CHALLENGE

Do you want to be saved? Do you want to be free from this burden of sin? Then put your faith in God, repent, confess that He is Lord, and don't wait another second ... come and be baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit ... just as Jesus commanded us to do.

PRAY

COMMUNION MEDITATION

Something here