

# WHEN ARE WE SAVED?

By William L. Schwegler

Do you believe that you were saved before you were baptized? A great many people would answer this question, yes, I believe that I was saved before being baptized or I believe that I am saved and I have never been baptized. A great many denominational preachers, and a few who claim that they are not part of a denomination, would answer this question with a “yes” as well. But what is the truth of the matter? What does God or His Son Jesus, who must save us say?

## Where do we find salvation?

Where in God’s plan for mankind do we come in contact with, obtain, or acquire salvation? Paul, the apostle of Jesus Christ, writes: “THEREFORE I ENDURE ALL THINGS FOR THE ELECT’S SAKES, THAT THEY MAY ALSO OBTAIN THE **SALVATION WHICH IS IN CHRIST JESUS** WITH ETERNAL GLORY.” (**II Timothy 2:10**) Where is salvation, Paul? It is **in Christ Jesus**. Every accountable person who ever walked this earth is either within or outside of Christ. But if you are saved then you must be “**in Christ Jesus**”.

Well then how does one come to be “**in Christ**?” We turn to Paul again: “FOR AS MANY OF YOU AS HAVE BEEN **BAPTIZED INTO CHRIST** HAVE PUT ON CHRIST.” (**Galatians 3:27**) How do we get into Christ? We are baptized into Christ. Hence before we are baptized we are outside of Christ, after we are baptized we are “**in Christ**.” Is there salvation outside of Christ? No! read again **II Timothy 2:10**, the apostle, writing by the inspiration of God, tells us that salvation is “**in Christ Jesus**.”

## What saves us?

During the early time of man’s existence on this earth, man’s wickedness became so great that God repented that he had made man. (**Genesis 6**) God determined to destroy this world because of its sin, its wickedness, as he will again at the end of time. But God gave one righteous man instructions whereby he was to save himself and his family. (**Genesis 6, 7**) By following the direction that God gave him this man Noah, his wife and his three sons and their wives were saved from God’s punishment of man’s wickedness. (**Genesis 7, 8**) The apostle Peter writing to mankind today, you and I, tells us: “....WHEN ONCE THE LONGSUFFERING OF GOD WAITED IN THE DAYS OF NOAH, WHILE THE ARK WAS A PREPARING, WHEREIN FEW, THAT IS, EIGHT SOULS WERE SAVED BY WATER. **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,) BY THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS CHRIST:” (**I Peter 3:20-21**)

What did you say Peter? Just like Noah and his family were saved by water, in like manner, "THE LIKE FIGURE" baptism saves us today. Not the washing of dirt from our flesh, but rather the answer of a good conscience being obedient to God. Just as Christ Jesus was buried and rose again, our old man is buried in baptism, raised again to walk a new life, as a new creature, as a new man. (II Corinthians 5:17)

### But why must we be baptized?

Saul was a man that persecuted those who were "in Christ", those who were "the church". "AS FOR SAUL, HE MADE HAVOCK OF THE CHURCH, ENTERING INTO EVERY HOUSE, AND HALING MEN AND WOMEN COMMITTED **them** TO PRISON." (Acts 8:3) He even went to the rulers in Jerusalem and secured from them "PAPERS", written authority, to go to Damascus to bring back any found "IN THIS WAY" for punishment. (Acts 9:1-2) But God had other plans for Saul, Jesus appeared to him on the road and when Saul recognized him "AND HE TREMBLING AND ASTONISHED SAID, LORD, WHAT WILT THOU HAVE ME TO DO? AND THE LORD **said** UNTO HIM, ARISE, AND GO INTO THE CITY, AND IT SHALL BE TOLD THEE WHAT THOU **MUST** DO." (Acts 9:6) So what did this man need to do to remove his many sins against God, against Jesus Christ, and those "**IN CHRIST**" from his soul? He tells us in a later period in his life. "AND NOW WHY TARRIEST THOU? ARISE, AND **BE BAPTIZED**, AND **WASH AWAY THY SINS**, CALLING ON THE NAME OF THE LORD." (Acts 22:16) Saul could not be saved in his sinful condition until his sins were removed. No man in that day or today can be saved while he is yet in sin. Therefore all men today must be baptized to wash away their sins before they are saved!!! Just as the apostle Peter instructed those who responded to his sermon at the first Pentecost after Jesus resurrection: "NOW WHEN THEY HEARD **this**, THEY WERE PRICKED IN THEIR HEART, AND SAID UNTO PETER AND TO THE REST OF THE APOSTLES, MEN **and** BRETHREN, WHAT SHALL WE DO? 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." (Acts 2:37-38)

### In Conclusion

We find, or gain salvation "**in Christ**." We can only be "**in Christ**" by being "**baptized into Christ**." Only when we are "**baptized**" and "**wash away**" our sins are we acceptable to God and become members of his family, citizens in his kingdom or members of Christ's church. (Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:47).