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“And this is the commandment we have from Him, that the one who loves God should love his brother also.” 1 John 4: 21

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**Sunday – May 27, 2018**

## **Heart to Heart...**

Recently the conversation went like this: A man asked me why I teach baptism is tied to salvation? I asked him what he taught. He said baptism was an outer sign of his inner faith and salvation, because one is saved before baptism. As he continued telling me that baptism was a work of man but salvation is the working of the grace of God, he continued from this point saying baptism has no relation to salvation pointing to Romans 10:9-10 which says if we confess with the mouth and believe in your heart you will be saved. Many tend to believe this. I quickly pointed out that Romans 6 comes before Romans 10 just to hear his thoughts. I asked him if it has no relation to salvation, was he baptized? He said yes. I asked him if there is no connection why was he baptized? His response was to show his salvation was secure already and his baptism expressed that. I asked him if one isn't baptized would they make it to heaven? He had to think that over.

After talking for a bit, I spoke of baptism as not a work of man as he believed. He quickly cut me off and said yes it was. I then asked, “*Did you confess Jesus?*” He said yes, as his Lord and Savior receiving Him into his heart. I asked if that was a work of man, something you did? He was perplexed. I asked him if he had repented to which he said yes. I pointed out that was a work on man's part. He was more perplexed. Then I came to belief...asking if he believed, to which he said yes. I pointed out our faith is the working of man. In all this I was trying to show that our response to the grace of God through Jesus Christ was something we did and it all ties to faith, even baptism. Baptism is not a work of man no more than confession or repentance but a faith response.

Jesus commissioned His apostles to “*go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.*” (Mark 16:15-16) Faith is tied directly to baptism. Jesus said it! Every account of water baptism in the New Testament shows it to be a faith response. Baptism wasn't a passing thought, optional at some time and point. It was the faith response to hearing the gospel. If the gospel isn't believed there will be no response and then condemnation will result.

As I continued in my discussion with this man, he said the thief on the cross wasn't baptized yet Jesus saved him. I made two quick points: (1) Jesus hadn't died. (2) “***But so that you may know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins...***” (Mark 2:10) While Jesus

walked on this earth He had the authority to forgive sins as His death was in His future to accomplish what God intended. After His resurrection is when He commissioned His apostles to go into all the world preaching and those who believed the preaching and were baptized would be saved. It's all faith tied to the gospel. Just because one is "dunked in water" does not mean they were baptized into Christ. The Lord is looking for a heart of faith at baptism. ***"Having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead."*** (Colossians 2:12) If one comes to baptism believing they are already saved or just an outer expression, they were never raised with Jesus because they don't have faith in the working of God to raise them.

The apostles taught baptism was tied directly to the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. That's the message of the gospel preached. Baptism was where you were buried with Jesus and entered His death. Just read Romans 6. If people believe they were saved before baptism and baptism is a burial why would one bury a live person? May God help us see and understand it's all a matter of faith! Think about it!!!

Brent