

JESUS' BLOOD & BAPTISM

What is God's eternal purpose (cf. Ephesians 1:3-14)?

- To give every spiritual blessing to those who are in Christ Jesus (1:3).
- To make them holy and without blame (1:4).
- To adopt them as children (1:5).
- To make them accepted (1:6).
- To make grace abound toward them (1:8).
- To make known to them the mystery of His will (1:9; cf. 3:3-6).
- To gather them together in Christ (1:10).
- To give them an inheritance (1:11).
- To bring praise to His glory (1:12).

How did God effect this wonderful outcome? Through the blood of His Son at Calvary's cross: "*In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace*" (Eph 1:7).

Are we passive in God's eternal purpose? The Ephesians "*heard the word of truth, the gospel of salvation*". Their response was to believe in Christ (Eph 1:13). Next, they were immediately baptized "*in the name of the Lord Jesus*" (Acts 19:5).

Peter explained why baptism must immediately follow belief, "*There is also an antitype which now saves us – baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ*" (1 Pet 3:21). The word "*answer*" means appeal, inquiry, seeking after earnestly (Thayer). The baptism Jesus commands is an appeal to God for a good conscience. Stated as a syllogism – a clear conscience is necessary for salvation (cf. Rom 14:23; 1 Tim 1:5), baptism is necessary for a clear conscience; therefore, baptism is necessary for salvation.

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Sunday: 9:30; 10:30 a.m. and 6:00 p.m.
Wednesday: 7:00 p.m.