

GLAD TIDINGS

“And we bring you good tidings of the promise made unto the fathers...” (Acts 13:32)

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BAPTIST MYOPIA

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Myopia is an eye condition where one does not see objects in the distance very clearly. Light rays from distance objects are focused in front of the retina instead of upon it, causing one not to see distant objects distinctly. Another word for this deficient eye condition is nearsightedness.

In a pamphlet recently passed out in neighborhoods, a local Baptist Church tells us: “GOD’S SALVATION IS A FREE GIFT! A Free Gift of Eternal Life to anyone that will genuinely place their faith in Him to be their personal Savior! Salvation does not depend on any works that we can now do or will do. Christ has done all the work necessary for your salvation with His death on the cross.”

Our Bible tells us plainly “...the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord” (Romans 6:23). It is apparent the Baptist understand the truth that eternal life, while a free gift, is conditional. According to their own statement, it is conditioned upon “anyone that will genuinely place their faith in Him to be their personal Savior!”. In

the same context of affirming Jesus’ complete work in salvation, the Baptist tell us that putting our faith in Jesus is necessary if we are to be saved.

Paul enjoys “confessing” along with “believing” as conditions for being saved. “Because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and shalt believe in thy heart, that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.” (Romans 10:9). Why do the Baptist not include in their instructions on salvation Paul’s testimony: “...and with they mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Romans 10:10)? It must be that they can only focus upon faith, and are spiritually myopic, not able to see the necessity of another condition: confessing Jesus as Lord.

Jesus clearly states the saving response to the gospel message is “He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that disbelieveth shall be condemned” (Mark 16:15-16). Jesus couples being baptized with believing the gospel message as conditions for salvation. Baptist myopia is the deficiency of seeing the necessity of believing and un-

able to focus upon another essential condition, being “baptized”.

Peter connects “repent” and “be baptized” as conditions for receiving “the remission of sins”. Peter answers the question, “what shall we do?” of the believing and convicted hearers with, “Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit” (Acts 2:38). Why do the Baptist not include Peter’s clear statement regarding receiving the remission of sins? It is because they are myopic. They can only see the act of believing and not the next essential steps of saving faith.

Receiving salvation is conditional, not upon works of merit, but upon acts of obedience. Baptist myopia is the deficiency of focusing upon only “believing”, and not the other essential conditions of “repent” “confess” and “be baptized”. Jesus is the only way to heaven, but we dare not follow the steps of myopic Baptists who fail to see the whole picture distinctly.