

Is Baptism Essential For Salvation? (No. 3)

By Casey Head

This series of articles is intended to prove from the scriptures that baptism is essential for salvation. So far, I have addressed two of the common objections that people raise; number one, the false notion that baptism is a “work of man,” and number two, the misnomer that baptism cannot be essential because the thief wasn’t baptized. If you have any questions or disagreements about the two objections I have dealt with thus far, please call me at (828)467-1463. In this article, I want to move on to another common objection. People often argue, “If baptism is essential, then what about the man in the desert who wants to be saved? What about foxhole conversions? What if a tree falls on someone as they are walking down to the river to be baptized?”

First of all, these objections are completely based in emotion. To show the absurdity of this logic, I want to apply it to faith (which all agree is necessary for salvation). Let’s say that an unbeliever is listening to a sermon, and he is about to believe, but he suddenly has a heart attack and dies. Does this mean that faith is unessential? What about the people in foreign countries who don’t possess a Bible of their own? Does that suddenly mean that the word of God is unnecessary when it comes to being born again (1 Pet. 1:22-23)? Or what about the man who is about to confess his faith in Christ (Rom. 10:9-10), but before the words leave his mouth, he falls down dead? Do these illustrations deny the importance of faith? Of course not. I think you can see that. It is the same with baptism. We can come up with all kinds of “what-if-scenarios” but ultimately the Bible still says what it has always said, that “he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved” (Mk. 16:16).

Let’s assume that there are exceptions to God’s law; that God will not require of some what he requires of others. I’m not saying I believe that, but let’s assume that this is true for just a moment. Here’s the question- do the exceptions to the rule negate the rule itself? Because the man in the desert cannot be baptized, does that mean that baptism is unnecessary for those in Spruce Pine who have access to a baptistery...or the Toe River? No. So this entire line of reasoning is faulty.

If you have any questions about this article, please call me at (828)467-1463. Or send an email to NCBibleQuestions@yahoo.com or a letter to P.O. Box 401, Spruce Pine, NC 28777. I am willing to have a private study with anyone on this issue. Also, if you are a local preacher and you would like to set up a public discussion where others could come with open Bibles and open minds to hear both positions, I would be happy and willing to do that as well.