

SALVATION, GOOD DEEDS and BAPTISM

Salvation and Good Deeds

Mayhew Community Baptist Church is an American Baptist denomination, which believes that salvation can only be attained through the grace of God and through His unmerited free gift of the forgiveness of sin. It isn't possible to "earn" salvation. To receive this gift, a person must believe and confess that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who died on the cross to bear the sins of humankind. Because of the fall of Adam and Eve in the Garden, all mankind from that day forward commits sin and are no longer acceptable to enter into an eternal relationship with our perfect Lord.

Think about everyday life. No matter how hard we may try, it is impossible to go through the day without committing sin. It may be an egregious act, a judgmental or mean thought, or a million other things. Remember, that God can make anything and everything He wants, yet the thing He wants most of all is YOU and ME! That's why He created us! He wants a loving relationship with us, one that will last throughout eternity. Now, there's a little (actually HUGE) problem here! It's called Free Will. When Adam and Eve walked away from God, that catastrophic event changed human life forever. No longer was mankind in a pure enough state to maintain a relationship with God, much less enter into His eternal kingdom. Even our best attempts to do Good Deeds isn't enough. We simply can't work our way into heaven.

The only way to resolve this was for God to come up with a plan to cleanse us of our sins so we will be pure enough to enter into His kingdom. You may ask, how can that possibly work? What does that have to do with God sending Jesus to live among us, only to be hung on a cross to die? Consider the following example of a courtroom:

Let's say a man steals a car and then wrecks it. At the end of the trial, the judge orders the culprit not only to pay back what the car is worth (new), but adds a good amount for further restitution. No matter how sorry the culprit is, he has no means to make this payment, so he is going to be thrown in jail. Just as the gavel is about to drop, an unknown person in the room stands up and says "Wait! I will pay for the damages. Let the defendant go free and clear." That, my friends, is unmerited grace. That is what Jesus did for us. All we have to do is to acknowledge our belief in Him, ask Him to forgive our sins and turn away from them. Once we are saved, it can never be snatched away from us.

So, why then, do we need to try to do what's right, try to keep God's commandments, especially when the Bible says we are no longer "under the law" but are saved by grace? The answer is the very reason we are here to begin with. LOVE. We will always struggle with sin, but we will never lack from the Love of God or the Love that He provides for us to give back to Him.

Prayer of Salvation (available to everyone)

Lord Jesus, I confess my sins and ask for your forgiveness. Please come into my heart as my Lord and Savior. Take complete control of my life and help me to walk in Your footsteps daily by the power of the Holy Spirit. Thank you, Lord for saving me and for answering my prayer.

Baptism

Where does that leave us with the Rite of Baptism? The church believes that baptism is not a requirement for salvation. Rather, it is an outward expression of the believer's inward belief in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, the cleansing of sin, and the person's commitment to follow Jesus for the rest of his or her life. Mayhew CBC has its own baptismal at the back of the stage in the Sanctuary. A person does not have to be baptized to attend the church; however, it is necessary for membership. Proof of baptism from a similar Christian church is valid. Numerous parishioners have elected to be baptized again in the church. It is a wonderful event. If you would like to consider this, please be in contact with Pastor Mike.

Submitted by Anne Chapman

* * *