

Believing



Foundations (Day 122)
by Derek Prince

We saw yesterday that the first condition for Christian baptism is repentance. The second condition for Christian baptism is stated by Christ Himself.

> "And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptised will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned.'" (Mark 16:15-16)

Here Christ states that everywhere the gospel is preached, those who desire to be saved are required to do two things: first to believe, then to be baptised. The Church of the New Testament took Him at His word. Once a person had believed in Jesus for salvation, he was then immediately baptised.

The experience of the Philippian jailer provides a dramatic example (see Acts 16:25-34). At midnight, in response to the prayers of Paul and Silas, the whole prison was shaken by a supernatural earthquake, and all the doors were opened. The jailer, knowing that he would have to answer with his own life for any prisoners who might escape, prepared to commit suicide. But Paul restrained him, saying, "Do yourself no harm, for we are all here." Under deep conviction, the jailer then asked, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Paul replied, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household."

Paul and Silas then presented the gospel message to the whole household. Obviously they included in the message the requirement of baptism. Responding with faith, the whole household was immediately baptised. They did not even wait for the light of dawn!

The response of the jailer and his family is the standard pattern in the New Testament. Baptism was regarded as an urgent requirement, but it was always preceded by faith.

The first two requirements for baptism, repenting and believing, line up with the first three foundation doctrines presented in Hebrews 6:1-2:

1. Repentance
2. Faith
3. The doctrine of baptisms

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In experience, as in doctrine, baptism must be built upon repenting and believing.

Devotional

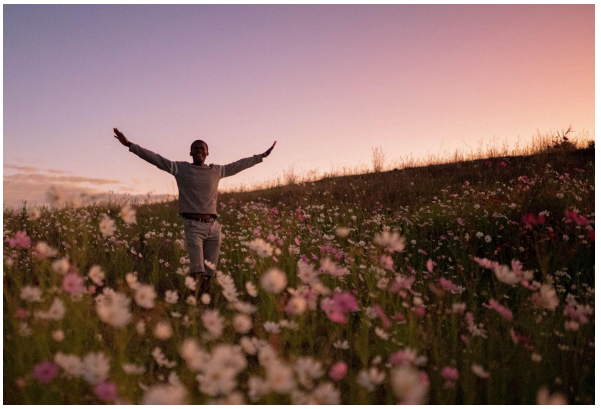
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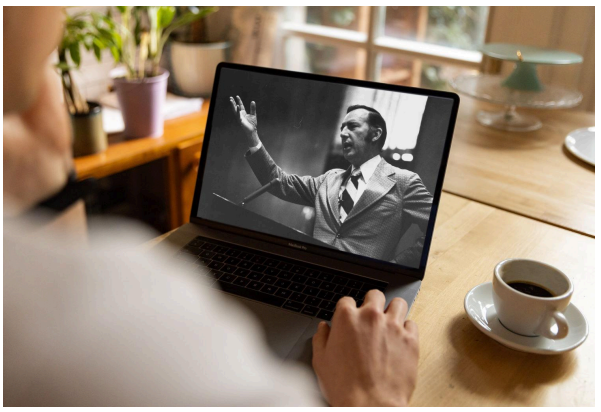
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