

Donahue's Second Negative

Mr. Cockrell says that I tried to say in my last article that he believes "that a man is not obligated to hear the gospel and repent." No, Mr. Cockrell, I did not say that you believed that. What I did say is that by your reasoning, both faith and repentance would be ruled out as necessary to salvation! Since you did not respond to this argument (which was one of my two primary responses to all but one of your proof texts), I will repeat the argument following: "Mr. Cockrell's argument in his first article was basically: 1) salvation is predicated upon faith; 2) faith precedes baptism; 3) therefore salvation precedes baptism. Now if this argument were true, then by the same reasoning, salvation could be shown to precede faith, and even repentance, therefore ruling out these two conditions as being necessary to salvation. The reader should notice the following parallel argument: (1) salvation is predicated upon repentance (II Cor 7:10, Lk 13:3, Acts 2:38, 11:18, 17:30, II Pet 3:9, Lk 15:7); (2) 'repentance always precedes faith' (according to Milburn Cockrell, paragraph #3); (3) therefore salvation precedes faith (and is therefore not at the point of faith). Similarly: (1) salvation is predicated upon hearing (Jn 5:25, Is 55:3); (2) hearing precedes faith and repentance (Rom 10:17); (3) therefore salvation precedes both faith and repentance, and occurs at the point of hearing the gospel!"

Now will you respond to the argument Mr. Cockrell? The truth of the matter is that just because salvation is predicated upon a condition, doesn't mean that salvation happens at the point of that condition being met. This principle is true for hearing, faith, repentance, confession, and baptism.

At The Point Of

Mr. Cockrell goes on to say that the "reader knows that I do believe that a man must hear the gospel and repent. But a sinner is not saved at the point of the external hearing of the gospel or repenting. He is saved at the point of faith in Christ." I think Mr. Cockrell is getting the point! He recognizes that a condition (e.g., hearing and repentance) can be necessary to salvation, but salvation not occur AT THE POINT of meeting that condition (e.g., hearing and repentance). The exact same thing is true about belief. Salvation is predicated upon hearing the gospel (Jn 5:25), but salvation does not occur AT THE POINT of hearing the gospel. Salvation is predicated upon repentance (II Cor 7:10, Lk 13:3), but salvation does not occur AT

THE POINT of repentance. Likewise, salvation is predicated upon belief (II Cor 7:10, Lk 13:3), but salvation does not occur AT THE POINT of belief.

Synecdoches

Mr. Cockrell says that since I admitted that the woman of Lk 7:48,50 was saved without baptism, because she lived under a different covenant than we do (Heb 9:15-17), that proved that the belief of his proof texts must not be a synecdoche for all the conditions of salvation, since they (the proof texts) were also stated before the death of Christ. First of all, these verses, though stated before Pentecost, were preparatory teachings, that is, teaching that would apply, not necessarily at the moment that they were spoken, but when the new covenant came into effect. Other such preparatory teachings are Jn 3:3-5, Mt 18:15-17, and Mt 5:32.

Secondly, until he responds to my argument about the Bible predicating salvation upon repentance, yet salvation not coming at the point of repentance, Mr. Cockrell is in effect admitting that synecdoches are used in the salvation passages. I don't care if he calls it a synecdoche; the important thing is that he admits that salvation can be predicated upon a condition, but not come at the point the sinner meets that condition.

Mr. Cockrell does admit the use of a synecdoche, when in answer to my question, "Why does Jn 5:25 not prove that all an alien sinner must do in order to be saved is 'hear' the gospel?" he responds by saying that the "person who hears the gospel in the sense that he understands and believes it (John 5:24-25) is saved." Mr. Cockrell thus admits that "hear" in Jn 5:25 is used as a synecdoche for understanding and believing.

I Pet 3:21

Mr. Cockrell then claims that I Pet 3:21 teaches that "baptism shows that one is already saved." Mr. Cockrell tries to prove this assertion by making some statements of his own that are not in the text, but are simply assertions. His statements that the fact that Noah "entered the ark seven days before the flood (Gen. 7:7,10), showing that a believer is safe in Christ prior to baptism," and that "those in the ark were declared saved by the waters of the flood, disclosing how baptism declares a believer to be already saved by faith in Christ," are not in (nor implied by) the text, but just come from Mr. Cockrell's imagination. I Pet 3:20-21 simply teaches that the physical salvation of Noah and his family by water are a type (figure) of the our spiritual salvation by water. The Bible says that "baptism doth also now save us." Instead

of just accepting God's word for it, Mr. Cockrell really believes just the opposite, that "baptism doth also NOT save us."

When Does The Blood Of Christ Save?

Mr. Cockrell says that "Mr. Donahue would make the symbol the savior. He would rob Christ of His saviorship and give it to the waters of baptism." No, Mr. Cockrell, I don't rob Christ of His saviorship and give it to the waters of baptism any more than you rob Christ of His saviorship and give it to faith. Neither faith nor baptism is the savior; Christ is. But we both agree that the salvation that Christ provided is conditional. The question is, "when are our sins washed away by the blood of Christ?" Acts 22:16 and other passages show that it is at baptism, and not at the point of faith.

I Cor 1:12-13

Mr. Cockrell responds to my argument on I Cor 1:12-13 by saying that the passage does "not imply baptismal regeneration as he alleges. He should stay out of I Cor. as it shows that baptism and the gospel are not the same thing (I Cor. 1:17)." First of all, I Cor 1:17 shows that baptism and preaching are two different things (both are necessary), not that baptism and the gospel are two different things. But just to say that "I Cor 1:12-13 do not imply baptismal regeneration" does not prove a thing. Mr. Cockrell, please respond to my arguments. That is what a debate is for! Would I be responding to your argument on Jn 3:15, if all I said was that it didn't teach salvation at the point of faith, without explaining why it didn't? I Cor 1:12-13 still teaches that for a person to be "of Christ" (that is, to be a Christian), Christ would have had to have been crucified for him, and that person would have had to have been baptized in the name of Christ.

Mr. Cockrell's Additional Proof Texts

Concerning Mr. Cockrell's arguments 8-14, I make the following two observations:

1. Though all seven of the proof texts show that we are saved by faith, not one teaches that we are saved at the point of faith. As I mentioned in my last article (with no response by Mr. Cockrell), passages like Heb 11:30 ("By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days") show that "saved by faith" and "saved at the point of faith" are two completely different things.

2. None of the seven proof texts given mention repentance. If they rule out baptism, simply because baptism is not mentioned, then they also would rule out repentance (as being necessary to salvation), because they do not mention repentance either.

Mark 16:16

Mk 16:16 reads, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be condemned." This verse teaches that baptism is necessary to salvation as much as the sentence, "He that eateth and digesteth his food shall live," teaches that one must digest his food in order to live physically. Let Mr. Cockrell tell us if Mk 16:16 is referring to spiritual salvation, and if so, if the salvation comes before or after the baptism mentioned in the passage.

Acts 2:38

Acts 2:38 reads, "Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost." Both the remission of sins and the gift of the H.G. are conditioned upon repentance and baptism in Acts 2:38. The primary meaning for the Greek word translated "for" in this verse ("eis") is "into." A quick glance at a Greek concordance will show that this word is translated the vast majority of time into words such as "into," "unto," and "to," indicating direction towards something. So this passage teaches that baptism is in the direction toward the remission (forgiveness) of sins. That proves the proposition I am contending for.

Mr. Cockrell's Answers To My Questions

Mr. Cockrell's answer to my second question proves that salvation does not come at the point of faith. Evidently his answer to my question - is it "necessary for a sinner to 'call upon the name of the Lord' to be saved, that is, to become a Christian" - is YES. Since Rom 10:14 goes on to say that a sinner cannot call on the name of the Lord until after he believes, and since Mr. Cockrell admits a sinner must call upon the name of the Lord to be saved, he admits then that salvation comes AFTER a person believes.

I also gave two other arguments in my last article showing that salvation does not come at the point of faith. Since Mr. Cockrell didn't respond to them, I repeat them here: "Rom 10:10 teaches that salvation is conditioned upon a 'confession' with the 'mouth' ('with the mouth confession is made unto salvation') which, of course, comes after the belief of the context.

Again, salvation comes after belief. Notice also that Acts 9:5-6 shows that Saul believed on the road to Damascus (something I don't think Mr. Cockrell will deny), but Acts 22:16 ('... and be baptized, and wash away thy sins ...') clearly shows that Saul was still in his sins at least three days later (Acts 9:9). This again shows that a person's sins are not washed away the moment he believes. In this case, the forgiveness of sins occurred at least three days after Saul believed in Jesus." Will you respond to these arguments this time Mr. Cockrell?

Answers To Mr. Cockrell's Questions

1. I baptize a child of the devil, in rebellion to the devil, in the process of becoming a child of God.
2. There is no such thing as a Christian that was not baptized in order to obtain the remission of sins. Anybody not baptized "for the remission of sins" will be lost. Why would I debate someone on an issue if it wasn't that important?
3. A Christian is not necessarily lost if he joins himself to a congregation that does not officially call itself a "church of Christ," as long as that congregation is faithful to the Lord. A Christian will be lost if he continues to have fellowship with a congregation that is not faithful to the Lord (such as a Baptist congregation that teaches that a person is saved before baptism), regardless of what it calls itself.

More Questions For Mr. Cockrell

1. Why do passages that show that salvation is predicated upon faith show that salvation is at the point of faith, while passages that show that salvation is predicated upon repentance do not show that salvation is at the point of repentance?
2. Does Paul teach in I Cor 1:12-13 that to be "of Paul," Paul would have had to have been crucified for him, and that person would have had to have been baptized in the name of Paul? _ Yes _ No
3. Does the word "For" that begins Gal 3:27 show that v.27 introduces the reason that "ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus" (v.26)? _ Yes _ No

Conclusion

The Bible clearly teaches that salvation does not come at the point of faith, but that instead, it comes when one is baptized. The question becomes, are we willing to accept the plain import of the Bible passages?