

Donahue's Third Negative

Mr. Cockrell notes correctly that I agree with him that faith saves, but still doesn't understand that that doesn't prove that we are saved at the point of faith. I'll quote once again Heb 11:8, "By faith the walls of Jericho fell down, after they were compassed about seven days." Here the walls fell by faith (of the Israelites), but not at the point of faith of the Israelites. Mr. Cockrell understands this principle as he agrees with me that repentance saves, but he believes that "repentance always precedes faith" (Milburn Cockrell, 1st article, 3rd paragraph). Now let's try Mr. Cockrell's own statement out on himself. "He (Mr. Cockrell) says he agrees with me that (repentance) saves, but then he says the (repenter) is still a child of the Devil (until he believes)!" The truth is, when the Bible teaches that faith saves, that does not say that salvation occurs at the point of faith; it is teaching that salvation is predicated upon faith. The same is true about repentance. When the Bible, Mr. Cockrell, and I teach that repentance saves, we are not saying that salvation occurs at the point of repentance; we are teaching that salvation is predicated upon repentance.

Read It Again, Mr. Cockrell

Mr. Cockrell states that I did not say one "word" about his argument on I Cor 1:14-17, 4:15. He needs to go back and check the top of my paragraph labeled "I Cor 1:12-13" in my last article. Mr. Cockrell also says that I did "not examine any of the verses in my (Cockrell's) arguments 8 to 14." Again, go back and read the answer to these arguments in my paragraph labeled "Mr. Cockrell's Additional Proof Texts" in my 2nd article.

Synecdoches

I don't care if you call it a synecdoche or not, but if Mr. Cockrell can understand that the Bible teaches that repentance saves, but that salvation does not come at the point of repentance, then he ought to be able to understand that just because the Bible teaches that faith saves, that is not the same as saying that salvation comes at the point of faith. However, Mr. Cockrell does admit the use of synecdoches, 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.

Salvation Is Not AT THE POINT OF Faith

It is the truth that if the Bible says that our salvation is conditioned upon baptism (Mk 16:16, Acts 2:38, etc.), and if baptism comes after belief (which it does), then salvation cannot occur at the point of belief. There is no way around that! Mt 10:22 does not refute this principle because when Christ said: "But he that endureth to the end shall be saved," he is not talking about initial salvation (the forgiveness of sins that occurs when a person is born again); he is talking about the salvation that Mk 10:30 speaks of when it says, "and in the world to come eternal life."

Other arguments showing that salvation does not come at the point of faith have already been presented, without response by Mr. Cockrell, therefore I repeat them following. Rom 10:13 undeniably teaches that salvation is conditioned upon calling on the name of the Lord, which, according to v.14, clearly comes after the belief spoken of in the context. Since a person must "call on the name of the Lord" to be saved, and since calling on the name of the Lord comes after believing in Jesus, then salvation comes after a person believes in Jesus.

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.

Besides teaching that the washing away of Saul's sins occurred after he believed, Acts 22:16 also teaches that the washing away of his sins occurred when Saul was baptized, and not before. Indeed, this passage teaches that if any alien sinner wants his sins washed away, he must be baptized.

Mark 16:16

Mr. Cockrell responds to Mk 16:16 by saying that a parallel statement would be "He that believeth and takes the Lord's Supper shall be saved," understanding correctly that we don't have to take the Lord's Supper to be saved initially. This statement paralleling baptism with

the Lord's Supper is true about like my friend's joke: "My first wife used to be a Pentecostal." It implies something that is false, that my friend has had more than one wife (he hasn't). My opponent's statement is misleading in two ways (and therefore not parallel to Mk 16:16, which is not misleading): (1) It does imply that initial salvation does not come until after one eats the Lord's Supper. This is incorrect. (2) It does imply that initial salvation is conditioned upon eating the Lord's Supper. This is incorrect. Notice that Mk 16:16 does imply that both of these things are true about baptism.

The following are parallel to Mr. Cockrell's "parallel" statement: (1) He that buys a ticket and gets on the train and stays with their relatives (in Atlanta) shall make it to Atlanta. (2) He that enters the race and gets the most votes and lives in the White House shall be elected President. Both of these statements are misleading. The first makes staying with relatives in Atlanta after arriving there necessary to getting to Atlanta, which is not true; and the second makes living in the White House after being elected President necessary to being elected, which is also not true.

Jesus did not say, "He that believeth and is baptized and EATS THE LORD'S SUPPER shall be saved (initially)." If he had said that, I would be teaching that eating the Lord's Supper is necessary to initial salvation. But Jesus did say, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." I say exactly the same thing. Why not just accept the obvious meaning of the verse?

I Pet 3:21

In his response to my argument on I Pet 3:21, Mr. Cockrell makes a big deal about the word "figure," but fails to notice that the figure in the verse is not baptism, but the salvation of Noah's household. Notice that the NKJV ("There is also an antitype which now saves us, namely baptism") makes baptism the antitype. The antitype (baptism) is the real; it is that which answers to the type or figure (Noah's salvation). The NIV indicates the same as it reads, "and this water symbolized baptism that now saves you also" (baptism is not the symbol, but is what is being symbolized, the real). The picture is Noah, the real is baptism. I Pet 3:21 says baptism saves; Mr. Cockrell says it does not.

I Cor 1:12-13

Since Mr. Cockrell only talked around I Cor 1:12-13 without answering my argument on it, I will repeat it for the third time following. Paul teaches in vs.12-13 that for a person 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. This implies 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. There is no way around this. I Cor 1:12-13 proves that to be of Christ, to be saved, one would have had to have been baptized in the name of Christ.

Acts 2:38

Mr. Cockrell does respond to my argument on Acts 2:38 by saying that the phrase "for (eis) the remission of sins" in the verse means "with reference to the remission of sins already obtained." His response (that "eis" means "with reference to") is shown to be false by the following paragraph.

If "eis" means "with reference to" in Acts 2:38, then that makes repentance only "with reference to" the remission of sins also, because the verse connects both repentance and baptism to the remission of sins with the word "for" (eis). But we know better than that; Mr. Cockrell agrees with me that repentance is "order to obtain" the remission of sins. The fact is, "eis" is never translated "with reference to" in the New Testament, not one time. Try out Mr. Cockrell's definition for "eis" in just a couple of familiar passages. Should Mt 15:14 be translated "... And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall with reference to (eis) the ditch?" Is Mt 26:28 only teaching that Jesus shed his blood "with reference to" (eis) the remission of sins, or is it teaching that Jesus shed his blood "in order to" the remission of sins? I challenge the reader to take whatever meaning he thinks "eis" carries in Mt 26:28, and stick it into Acts 2:38. Let's be consistent! The truth is that "eis" means "into" or "unto" the vast majority of times it is used in the N.T.; check the Greek concordance for yourself. Acts 2:38 teaches that baptism is "into" (or "unto") the remission of sins; therefore proving my proposition.

Next, I ask you to read Mr. Cockrell's "Evils of Baptismal Regeneration" alongside the following responses:

1. If my position makes the preacher the savior since he baptizes, then faith being necessary to salvation makes the preacher the savior, since the sinner hears the word of God from the preacher (Rom 10:13-14).

2. The teaching that baptism is necessary to salvation may be out of character with what Mr. Cockrell THINKS Christ came to teach, but it is in complete character with what Jesus actually did come to teach (Mk 16:16). I Pet 3:21 does teach that baptism does not put away the filth (dirt, NASV) of the flesh; instead it is a spritual washing ("the answer of a good conscience").
3. The receiving of a miraculous measure of the Spirit does not evidence regeneration, else Saul was regenerated while laying down naked all night, plotting to kill David, God's chosen (I Sam 19:15-24). The non-miraculous indwelling of the Spirit that people receive at baptism (Acts 2:38), and not before baptism, does evidence the approval of God (I Jn 3:24, Gal 4:6, Acts 2:38, 5:32, I Jn 4:13, Rom 8:9, Eph 1:13-14).
4. The NASV translates the phrase in I Pet 3:21, "an appeal to God for a good conscience." Wigram-Green defines the word translated "answer" in the KJV as "question, inquiry, demand." Thayer defines it as "an inquiry, ... a demand, ... earnest seeking, ... a craving, an intense desire."
5. This point does not prove that baptism is not necessary. It only proves that we don't have to mention baptism in every letter, article, or sermon that we deliver, especially when we are talking to people who have already been baptized, as John is in his letter. However, John did teach the necessity of baptism in Jn 3:5.
6. Notice a parallel: Is a man led to belief by the Spirit of God, or the spirit of the Devil? If he is led by the devil, we must praise the Devil for his work of evangelism. If he is led by the Spirit of God, then he is saved before belief, for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God" (Rom 8:14). Mr. Cockrell obviously is making an argument he doesn't even believe himself.

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 meaning of the Bible passages?