



Seeking and saving the lost...

**Welcome, The Apple Valley Church of Christ extends a warm welcome to our guests. We are honored by your presence today. If you have any questions or concerns please express them to us. We are all here to serve.**

Prayer List

Vicky asked that we pray for Shelly who is having a biopsy. Pray for Wanda's sister Peaches who is having upcoming procedures for her eyes. Francisco has been ill, pray for him. Pray for Sylvia and family. Sister McKinney is seeing a neurosurgeon Sept. 15th, also pray for Stephanie Munoz who has cancer and for her family as well. Thank God that Donte Young, born July 22nd is home and eating, pray for Shetera's health. Also pray for sister Lorena's cousin Jackie Grimes who has suffered a heart attack. Pray for Wanda's friend Josie Esperanza who has suffered the loss of her husband. Pray for the Brown family who have suffered a loss. Pray for brother Henderson and family, he also asks prayers for the Ray Hamilton family for their loss. Thom and Mary Elizabeth need prayers. Pray for brother Freeman, he will need more eye surgery, he also asked that we pray for his uncle Leron Dozier who suffered a stroke. Pray for Donna's brother Robert. Keep Rosetta's grandson in prayer. Jeremiah and Stan ask for prayers as they make some



decisions. Joe Brass was burned by hot coffee pray for him. Michael is having some shoulder pain, pray for him, he also asked that we pray for his uncle Tony. Pray for sister Leola's friend Elena Armstrong who has stage 4 kidney cancer.

Today's Services

1. Singing
2. Opening Prayer
3. Singing
4. Preaching
5. Invitation Song
6. Communion Song
7. Communion
8. Song Before Offering
9. Offering
10. Announcements
11. Closing Song
12. Closing Prayer

**Song Leader - Stan  
Prayer - Henry  
Preaching - Stan  
Table Lead - Jeremiah  
Helper - Dan  
Helper - Prince  
Announce - Lenard  
Prayer - Brandon**

Are We Saved Like The Thief On the Cross?

I cringe when I hear people talk about whether or not we are saved like the criminal, or the thief, on the cross. As you probably know, there were two men crucified beside Jesus. To one of the men, Jesus said, "Today you will be with me in Paradise" (Luke 23:43). Many have tried to use this as an argument against the necessity of baptism. But as ridiculous as that

Plan of Salvation for Mankind

- Hear the Word .....Romans 10:17
- Believe the Word ....Mark 16:15-16
- Repent of your sins .....Luke 13:3-5
- Confess His name Mat.....10:32-33
- Baptism .....1Peter 2:211
- Live Faithful .....Revelation 2:10

Schedule of Services

- Sunday Bible Class .....10:00 AM
- Sunday Worship .....11:00 AM
- Sunday Afternoon .....2:00 PM
- Wednesday Evening .....7:00 PM



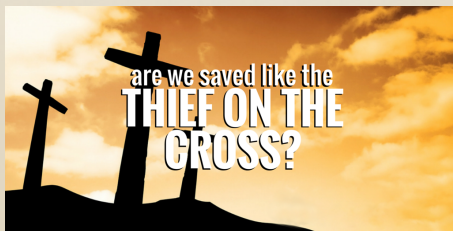
argument is, sometimes the counter-arguments seem to me just as ridiculous. There is a sense in which our salvation is much like the thief's salvation and a sense in which it is gloriously different.

When answering those who say this story proves baptism isn't necessary, I've heard people argue that the thief had probably been baptized by John the Baptizer (which may be true but is completely irrelevant). And I even heard someone argue once that the thief wasn't saved at all. I could go on-and-on about the counter-arguments I've heard, but most of them show that neither side in this debate seems to understand what salvation is all about.

### 1. How is our salvation similar?

There is a sense in which the criminal on the cross was saved exactly as anyone is now - or has ever been - saved. He was saved by grace through faith (Ephesians 2:8). The thief's faith is evident in the story:

He rebuked the other criminal for mocking Christ, saying, "Do you not fear God?" (Luke 23:40). He acknowledged Jesus' innocence (Luke 23:41). He acknowledged his own guilt (Luke 23:41). He acknowledged Jesus' Kingship (Luke 23:42). He had faith in Jesus' resurrection, as well as his own, because he asked Christ to remember him when He came into His kingdom (Luke 23:42). We must, like this criminal, put our faith in Jesus. We must acknowledge our own guiltiness and trust in His power to save. And like the criminal, if we are forgiven, it is not because we have earned forgiveness by doing great deeds for God, "For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, not a result of works, so that no one may boast" (Ephesians 2:8-9).



It breaks my heart that I rarely hear this point made when people argue for the necessity of baptism.

### 2. Then why do WE have to be baptized and he didn't?

This point is very simple to answer and it is really surprising to me that anyone would use this story to try and prove baptism isn't necessary.

First of all, Jesus forgave the sins of this man before the New Covenant had been established. As the writer of Hebrews said, "For a will takes effect only at

death" (Hebrews 9:17). The New Covenant was not in effect yet. People were, at that moment, still under the Law of Moses. The criminal on the cross was forgiven in exactly the same

way that the paralytic was forgiven in Matthew 9.

Second, Christian baptism is about the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus. None of those things had happened yet when the criminal on the cross was forgiven. Listen to the words of Romans 6:1-7 and try to understand why it would be absurd to think the criminal on the cross would be under the same obligation to be baptized as people today:

Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. We know that our old self was crucified with him in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. For one who has died has been set free from sin.

Third, the Christian gospel had not yet been preached. After His resurrection, Jesus told the apostles that forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, "beginning from Jerusalem" (Luke 24:47). Forgiveness of sins had not yet even begun to be preached, but it was on the Day of Pentecost, when Peter said, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

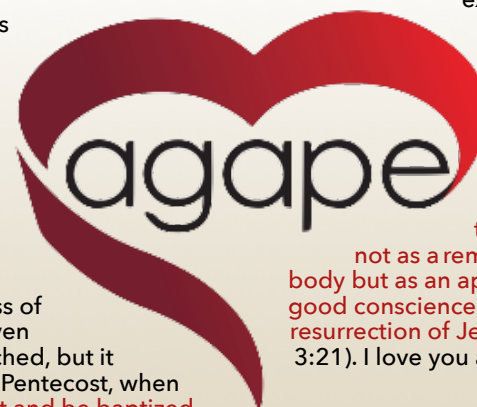
Salvation today is gloriously different than it was for the criminal on the cross, because salvation today is based on a more complete picture of what God has done for mankind and it is part of a new and better covenant with God (Hebrews 7:22). If you want to enter into this new and better covenant, you must be baptized.

### 3. If you trust Jesus, as the criminal did, you will do what Jesus said to do.

After Jesus died on that cross, was buried in a tomb, and rose from the dead, He told His apostles to go out and spread the Good News about what He had done. He told them, "Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned" (Mark 16:16).

Faith is about trusting God. The criminal on the cross trusted Him. Do you? Jesus said, "Whoever believes AND is baptized will be saved." The criminal on the cross wasn't told that, but you are! Do you trust Jesus? Will your trust be evidenced by your actions?

Baptism is us saying to the Lord, "I believe you and I trust you. Please save me." That's why when you are baptized, you are "calling on His name" (Acts 22:16).



So let's stop making excuses. Let's stop arguing. Let's just trust Jesus enough to do what Jesus said to do, believing the inspired words of Scripture, "Baptism, which corresponds to this, now saves you, not as a removal of dirt from the body but as an appeal to God for a good conscience, through the resurrection of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 3:21). I love you and God loves you.

Wes McAdams

### Traveling

Pray that Louis returns home safely. Pray that Travis is safely returned to us.

### Holiday Baskets

We are now collecting the items necessary for holiday baskets. Needing sweet potatoes at this time.

### Coats And Blankets

Vicky is starting to collect coats and blankets for the poor, please donate what you have.

### Spiritual Devotion

#### 2 Timothy 2:1-2

Saturday September 12th 9:00-11:00 AM at the church building.

### Prayer Meeting

Friday September 4th 6:30 PM at the church building.

### Class Teachers Needed

For both Sunday and Wednesday children's class in September. Sign up on sheet on bulletin board in the foyer.

### Portable Baptistry

Needing donations to purchase a portable baptistry so we can move forward with building remodel plans. Anticipated cost \$1200.

### Welcome Home, Birthday Party

For Travis. September 28th, 6:30 PM 10570 Dover Rd., Apple Valley