

HANDOUT FOR LESSON FIVE
SALVATION AND CHURCH MEMBERSHIP

INTRODUCTION:

- 1) The question of the membership or composition of the church is answered by the study of the nature of the church in lessons one and three: the church is the people of God, the body of Christ, the community of the Holy Spirit; that is, it is a people characterized by its relationship to deity.
- 2) This lesson addresses what is involved in how one is brought into that relationship.
- 3) The same idea may be expressed as “being saved.”
- 4) This definition of the church once more emphasizes the centrality of Christ for understanding the church since his mission was to seek and save the lost. Luke 19:10.
- 5) It is important to remember that, while the church does not save (Christ is the Savior), neither does the church have nothing to do with salvation; the church is the people who are saved.

BODY:

- 1) God’s action. John 3:16.
 - a) Because all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Rom. 3:23), the only way that human beings can be saved is for God is his grace to take the initiative.
 - b) Different descriptions of the atonement.
 - i) Sacrifice – the language of worship.
 - ii) Reconciliation – the Language of Personal Relations.
 - iii) Redemption – The Language of the Market Place.
 - iv) Justification – The Language of the Law Court.
 - v) Victory – The Language of Warfare.
- 2) The Human Response.
 - a) Faith.
 - i) The importance of faith.
 - ii) How does a person come to believe?
 - iii) The elements of faith.
 - iv) Relation of faith to its expressions.
 - (1) Faith and Baptism.
 - (2) Faith and confession.
 - (3) Faith and Repentance.
 - b) Baptism.
 - i) Importance.
 - ii) Meaning.
 - (a) Confession of faith.
 - (b) Act of repentance.
 - (c) Forgiveness of sins.

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- (d) Gift of the Holy Spirit.
- (e) New Birth.
- (f) Death and Resurrection.
- (g) Membership in the Church.

CONCLUSION:

- 1) Baptism provides an objective assurance of having received God's promised salvation in Christ.
- 2) That may lead to the subtle temptation to trust in baptism for salvation instead of trusting in God, his act in Christ, and his word of promise.
- 3) Similarly, there are other things that can become misplaced objects of trust.
 - a) One person may trust his faith as a guarantee of salvation.
 - b) Another may trust in some experience as the assurance of salvation.
 - c) Yet another may depend on doctrinal correctness for salvation.
- 4) As valuable and desirable as these things, or other things that may become the basis of assurance, may be, they must not become the objects of trust.
- 5) There often seems to be a temptation to rely on something else rather than to trust in God's grace in Christ.
- 6) Truly to trust in God includes responding to him in the appointed way.