



September 10, 2013

It's Not Complicated

By Teresa Hampton

Children and teens in our congregation are studying the book of Acts in preparation for Bible Bowl. We asked them to read the entire book every month until competition. I am on my fifth read, and one thing has become increasingly apparent. Becoming a Christian is not complicated. We just need to follow the teachings and examples of early Christians as found in this great book.

Those who heard about Jesus believed that He was the Son of God (Acts 8:37, 15:7, 16:31 19:4). Belief is essential for us, too. It is something we *do*, but it is not a work of merit.

Believers were told to repent. That is, turn from wickedness and live for Jesus (2:38, 17:30). Repentance is just as important today. It is something we *do*, but it is not a work of merit. It is an expression of obedient faith for those seeking salvation.

Confessing Jesus as the Son of God was necessary for salvation (8:37). Confession is something we *do* with our mouth, but it is not a work of merit. It is obediently pledging our allegiance to the King.

Baptism, immersion in water, was commanded for remission of sins (2:41, 8:12-13, 8:38, 9:18, 10:48, 16:15, 16:33, 18:8, 19:5). Baptism is something we *do*, but it is not a work of merit. It is an expression of obedience. Baptism is a call to God to wash away our sins (22:16). Every conversion in the book of Acts culminated with baptism. The gospel accounts and the books following Acts confirm the necessity of baptism for remission of sins (Matt. 28:19, Mark 16:16, Rom. 6:3-4, 1 Cor. 12:13, Gal. 3:27, Col. 2:12, 1 Pet. 3:21). Each

Also, let us not forget that *every* step to salvation is based on God's grace, his unmerited favor. Nearly two thousand years ago he offered his only Son. Salvation is a gift, but we must meet the conditions of obedience to claim the gift as our own (Rom. 5:15).

Today, if you go to a street corner and ask passersby "what must I do to be saved?" you would likely receive many differing answers. The growth of denominationalism has turned salvation into a smorgasbord. The truth is, becoming a Christian is not complicated.

Today's Verse: *In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight* (Eph. 17-8).

If you would like to subscribe to Wellspring, send e-mail to wellspringforwomen@hotmail.com and type the word subscribe in the subject line. Previous Wellspring articles have been archived at <http://karnscoc.org/biblical-teachings/publications/wellspring/> and <http://www.TheBible.net/wellspring>