

Prayer List



Of Our Number

- ◆ Janice Carnley—Shoal Creek
- ◆ Wilfred Derrick—health problems
- ◆ Jeff Mashburn—health problems

Others in Need

- ◆ Danny Davis—back problems
- ◆ April Estain—expecting in Jan.
- ◆ Mary Lou Joseph—cancer
- ◆ Tony Jones—Parkinson's
- ◆ Denver Kitzan—surg. recovery
- ◆ Mary Milsted—lung cancer
- ◆ Shane Price—cancer
- ◆ Larry Shapley—hospice care
- ◆ The family of Roy Simon
- ◆ Yoel Urra—improving
- ◆ Ronnie Wells—health problems
- ◆ Craig Wray—stage 4 cancer
- ◆ Pray for Christians overseas, such as those facing intense persecution in Pakistan and certain parts of India.

Continued in next column...

To Our Visitors



We are happy and honored that you are here! Please fill out a visitor's card and give us a chance to get to know you. If you have any questions about anything said or done in Bible class or worship, please ask. We seek to give a Bible answer for everything we do (Colossians 3:17; 1 Peter 3:15; 4:11).

Privileged to Serve



Announcements—Mark Howze
Song Leading—Sunday—David Howze; Wednesday—Caleb Howze
Serving the Lord's Supper
 Head: Leo Derrick; Helpers: Ethan Howze, Ezra Howze, Glenn Howze
Lord's Supper PM
 Head: Mark Howze
 Helper: Caleb Howze
Scripture Reading—Josh Lawson

Events



Nov. 12
Men's Meeting

Nov. 29
4th Wednesday Singing

Faithful Worship — **1) Praying** to God the Father in the name of Jesus Christ (Luke 11:1-2; John 16:23; Eph. 5:20; Phil. 4:6); **2) Singing** without mechanical instruments (Matt. 26:30; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16-17; Heb. 2:12); **3) Preaching** God's Word (Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2:42; 20:7); **4) Giving** weekly as prospered, cheerfully (1 Cor. 16:1-2; 2 Cor. 9:7); **5) The Lord's Supper** on the first day of every week (Matt. 26:26-28; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20-34; 16:2; Heb. 10:23-31).

THE BAKER BULLETIN

The weekly bulletin of

The church of Christ in Baker, FL

November 12, 2023

Meeting Times

Sundays:

10AM Bible Class
 11AM Worship
 6PM Worship

Wednesdays:

7PM Bible Class

Other Information

5761 Hwy. 4
 P.O. Box 285
 Baker, FL 32531 USA
 850-669-9117

Website:

churchofChristatBaker.com

Radio Program:

104.7FM Sundays 8:30AM
 WAAZ1047.com livestream

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Single, Married, or Cohabiting?

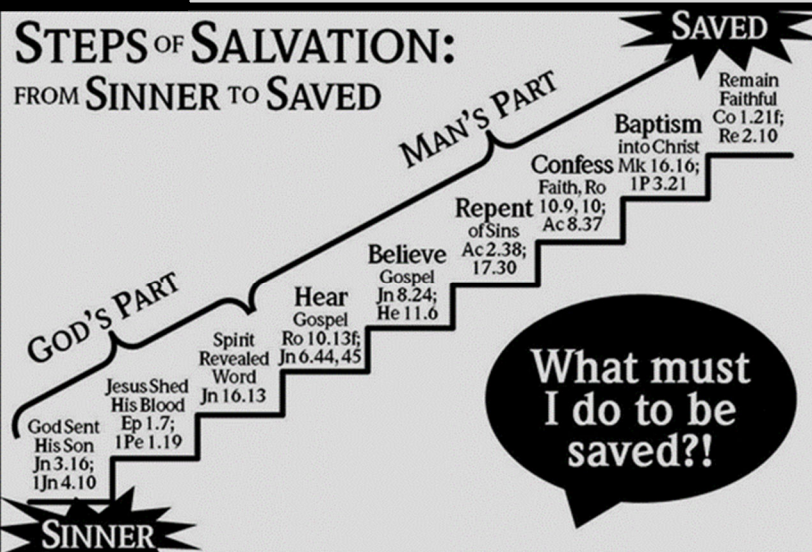
By David Sproule

A telephone surveyor called the office this week and one of his questions was, "Are you single, married or cohabiting?" Beyond the fact that such a question to a preacher is amusing (or maybe it's not these days) is the reality that our society is in full acceptance of "cohabiting" as a conventional living arrangement (whether temporary or permanent). Much is implied by the question: cohabiters are not considered single; some are enjoying some privileges of marriage without being married; the term "cohabiting" is general enough to include a male-and-female cohabiting or even a male-and-male or female-and-female; providing that option in the question ensures that no one is offended by the question (except for Christians, of course).

Our society might be in full acceptance of cohabitation and parading the idea that "marriage" is a thing of the past and not necessary in our "advanced culture," but such notions find no acceptance in God's eyes. May we etch Hebrews 13:4 into our souls, "Marriage is honorable among all, and the bed undefiled; but fornicators and adulterers God will judge."

STEPS OF SALVATION: FROM SINNER TO SAVED

"...ye were the servants of sin..."
 (Romans 6:17).



"...but ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered you. Being then made free from sin, ye became the servants of righteousness" (Rom. 6:17b-18).

Commands From Christ Are Not Optional

I recently received a daily devotional email sample from a denominational organization hoping I would be interested in signing up (I suspect an acquaintance of mine who is a member of that particular group gave them my name). After the devotional, they answered a Bible question. The question was: "Can you go to heaven if you 'trust' Jesus as your Lord and Savior but you are not yet baptized?"

They began their answer by saying: "Yes. Baptism has nothing to do with salvation." Later in the answer they stated: "Baptism is an ordinance instituted by Christ until the 'end of the age'...Clearly this command was not only for the apostles who heard it but for His followers throughout the entire age." Finally, they concluded with: "One is saved without, apart from and before baptism. Those who are saved should desire baptism as a public profession of faith, but please realize that it is not necessary for salvation. If a person believes in Jesus as Lord and is never baptized, they will still be saved."

I would like to analyze how they answered this most sincere and important question about baptism and see if it really "holds water." I think it is very interesting that they admit that baptism is a command from Christ and then declare that it does not have to be followed. Imagine that - the command from Jesus Christ to be baptized is optional (or so they say)! I wonder what other commands from Christ would be optional? I guess all that are not in line with man's teachings.

All facetiousness aside, listen to what Jesus Himself said of what our attitude should be toward every command He gives:

- John 14:15, "If ye love me, keep my commandments."
- John 14:21, "He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me."
- John 15:10, "If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love."
- John 15:14, "Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever ever I command you."

Note that there is no room for options, opinions, or omissions. That's because Jesus is the One with all authority in heaven and on earth (Matt. 18:18). Whatever He has commanded, we'd better do. And Jesus commanded baptism as necessary for salvation (Mark 16:16) and declared it as the process for making disciples (Matt. 28:19). The apostles went about baptizing "in the name of" Jesus Christ (i.e. in the manner and for the purpose He authorized, see Acts 2:38; 10:48). They knew something we should never forget: If it is a command from Christ, it's not an option. —by Edd Sterchi

Editor's note: The following is to further clarify what is stated above and to hopefully ensure that we as Christians will not make faulty propositions in efforts to defend the Truth (Philippians 1:17). The fact that water baptism is a command from Christ is not what proves that baptism is required for a lost person to become saved. Partaking of communion is also a command from Christ, but that fact alone does not mean that taking communion will change an alien sinner to a saved child of God. When lost people asked what to do to become saved, they were not told to take communion, but to repent and be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Acts 2:36-41). We know that water baptism is essential to become converted from lost to saved, not simply because it is a command from God, but because God told us its purpose. He said it necessary for one's initial salvation.

The phrase "initial salvation" is used here because in the Scriptures terms like "salvation" can be used in more than one way, and one can lose his salvation after initially becoming saved (Galatians 5:4, etc.). For example, Paul told Timothy to take heed to himself and to sound doctrine to "save himself," even though Timothy had already become saved (1 Timothy 4:16; cf. 2:15; Acts 15:11; Romans 5:9, 10; 1 Corinthians 3:15).

The bottom line is that water baptism is necessary for lost sinners to become saved children of God because God said so (Mark 16:15, 16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38-41; 22:16; Romans 6:3-5; Galatians 3:26-29; Colossians 2:11-13; 1 Peter 3:20, 21, etc.). —Jason