

The Preacher Who Baptized Me

Compiled by Paul R. Blake

Introduction: Acts 9:1-19

A. Obeying the gospel is a life-changing, momentous, memorable event. I can recall every detail of the day I was baptized, Monday, April 13, 1970, at Tomlinson Run church of Christ after school. The preacher and his family were sitting at the dinner table when I came in the parsonage and asked to be baptized. The preacher took me to the building and asked me, in view of my youth, what would I do if he refused to baptize me. I told him I would go down the road to the next meetinghouse and ask the preacher there to baptize me. Afterward, we went to Grandma Norman's house, and I walked around the yard with Terry and Sandra and recited Bible stories until Mom said it was time to go home.

B. I feel confident you vividly remember the day you were baptized, as well as the person who immersed you, and the place where it happened.

1. What is the most important thing to remember about that day?
2. It is not the date, the location, nor the man who baptized you; it is the fact that you obeyed the Gospel, were cleansed of your sins, and entered into the family of God.
3. Dates can be forgotten; church buildings can be torn down, preachers can pass away or fall away.
 - a. The preacher who baptized me was the man I looked up to as a child and said, "I am going to grow up and be a preacher like him some day; well, he left his wife and began worshiping with an institutional church in his 70s.
4. Those things have no bearing on our present relationship with God.
5. Lightly humorous comment about who baptized whom: "If I were you, I would probably be re-baptized."

C. This illuminates a greater truth; that is, our faith cannot reside in our confidence in the man who baptized us.

1. He is as beset with weakness and temptation as any other man.
 - a. 1Cor. 9:27; Gal. 2:11-13
2. His job is to preach the Gospel - 1Cor. 1:12-17
3. Whether he baptizes you or not has nothing to do with whether he has fulfilled his duty.
4. Your baptism is about you and your relationship with God; it is not about the preacher and his relationship with God.
 - a. Nor is it about your relationship with the preacher.
 - b. Meeting preachers notching their Bibles
 - c. Insisting on a certain man to do the baptizing, or insisting on being the only one who can baptize family members edges up on placing more emphasis on the who rather than what of baptism.
5. It is not about who baptizes you.

D. Consider the struggles of Ananias the baptizer.

1. Saul was wreaking havoc in the church - Acts 8:1-3.
2. He was traveling from place to place persecuting Christians, having them arrested and participating in their executions - Acts 7:58.
3. Saul encountered Jesus on one of his persecution trips - Acts 9:1-9
4. Lord sent Ananias the reluctant preacher to baptize him - Acts 9:10-18

I. 10 - ANANIAS, THE SEPARATED SERVANT

- A. How he was living - He was a "Disciple" - a believer and follower of Jesus
 - 1. A teacher of the Gospel and a baptizer of believers needs to be a baptized believer himself, growing in the Lord.
- B. How he was listening - "Behold, I am here, Lord."
 - 1. Gen. 22:1, 11; 1Sam. 3:10

II. 11-16 - ANANIAS, THE SKEPTICAL SERVANT

- A. Vs. 11-12 - The servant's command - Go help Saul
 - 1. God had already shown Saul that a man named Ananias will be coming by to restore his sight. To Ananias, this command probably didn't make much sense. After all, Saul hated Christians. God wants this man to go to Saul the Christian killer all alone.
 - 2. Occasionally the commands of the Lord do not make sense. It did not make sense for Noah to build a boat in the middle of dry land. It didn't make sense for Moses to speak to a rock to get water in the desert. It didn't make sense to march around Jericho 7 times for 7 days in order to defeat the city. But that is what the Lord commanded.
 - a. 1Sam. 15:22; Micah 6:8
- B. Vs. 13-14 - The servant's concern - When Ananias hears the command from the Lord, he reminds the Lord of all the evil things he has heard about Saul, trying to reason his way out of the Divine command.
 - 1. Luke 14:18 - "But they all with one accord began to make excuses."
 - 2. Exodus 2-3 - Moses reasoning with God in an attempt to be excused
- C. Vs. 15-16 - The servant's consolation - God tells Ananias that Saul is going to fulfill a very special place in the kingdom - 1Sam. 16:7
 - 1. God doesn't want our caution, comfort, or personal security. He wants our obedience.

III. 17-18 ANANIAS, THE SUBMISSIVE SERVANT

- A. Vs. 17 - His response - "He went his way..." He got busy doing the Lord's will
 - 1. Obedience is the response of faith - Heb. 11:8
 - 2. It is the response of love - John 14:15.
- B. Vs. 17 - His reaction - Ananias went to the house where Saul was and touched him and called him brother.
- C. Vs. 18 - His reward - Because Ananias obeyed the Lord, Saul became a crucial servant of the Lord.
 - 1. If Ananias had held onto his reluctance, God would have found someone to baptize Saul. Ananias was a means, but he was not the only means.
 - 2. But had Ananias refused, he would have come under judgment for his own weakness.

Conclusion:

- A. It is not about who baptizes you; it is about Who saves you.
 - 1. Rom. 6:4-6; 1Cor. 1:13; Acts 22:16