



Church of Christ

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204 Dix Road Jefferson City, MO 65109

Heart to Heart...

I came out of the store and found a pamphlet on my windshield. It had on the cover, "God's Simple Plan Of Salvation." I read the pamphlet while sitting there. Two things stood out to me that was printed: (1) *"Would you like Jesus to be your Savior and come into your heart? Just pray the sinners prayer: Oh God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus was my substitute when He died on the cross. I believe His shed blood, death, burial and resurrection were for me. I now receive Him as my Savior. Thank you for the forgiveness of my sins and the gift of salvation and everlasting life, because of your merciful grace. Amen."* (2) The pamphlet mentioned baptism with these thoughts: *"You should be baptized in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ as a public testimony of your salvation, and then unite with a Bible believing church without delay."*

In the reading of God's holy word, I have never found one person that was saved by praying a prayer. Beginning from the first sermon preached in Acts 2 to the conversion of Paul and others, no one was ever told to repeat a prayer, much less a sinners prayer.

Jesus taught His disciples: **"And He said to them, 'Go into all the world and preach the gospel to all creation. He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved; but he who has disbelieved shall be condemned.'"** (Mark 16:15-16) Jesus instructed that something had to be preached first, the gospel. The gospel is about the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. (I Cor. 15:1-4) Those who believed that gospel responded in baptism and they would be saved. Notice salvation comes after believing and baptism. Not saved first and then being baptized! Nowhere in God's word do you read that baptism is a *"public testimony of your salvation."* Baptism is where one enters Jesus and contacts His blood. (Rom. 6) It's in baptism that one is clothed with Jesus. (Gal. 3:27) When Peter preached to the Jews in Acts 2, they asked what to do to be saved. Peter responded, **"Repent, and each of you be baptized into the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."** (Acts 2:38) Forgiveness comes at the point of contacting Jesus' blood and that happens at baptism. It didn't happen at repentance. Repentance is where one is willing to turn completely, a change of mind and heart. Baptism is the only place and time one can have their sins washed away. (Acts 22:16)

The result of entering Jesus through baptism was being added to the number of those saved, the church. (Acts 2:47) One doesn't join themselves up *with a Bible believing church*. The Lord adds you to His people automatically. It's not a club or a membership that you join. You are placed in Christ's body, the church, by God. (I Cor. 12:18) The church are the people that have been united with Jesus in baptism for forgiveness of their sins and follow the truth of His word. They are literally the church of Christ! The church, not denominations (which means it is man made), upholds and supports the truth. (I Tim. 3:15)

One has to be careful today because of all the religious material put out in writing and on radio and TV. We must hold to the truth of God's word, always learning, moving forward with the truth as revealed from God Himself. There is only one way one is saved and one way one enters the body of Jesus. Think about it!!!

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