

Life Link

Countdown:

Back Ground:

Music Video:

Sermon Video Illustration:

Title: Faith Revisited

Big Idea: In 1 Peter 3:19-21 seems to provide a description of an event that transpired while Jesus was in the tomb for three (3) days. This is a very difficult passage to understand its meaning or implication. Students of the Bible have developed different understandings of what this passage means. One thing is clear and the believer must never lose sight of is the "Faith in Jesus" is the foundation of our salvation. While there are many things in the Bible that we may not understand the one thing is for sure Jesus died on a cross, spent three (3) days in the grave and arose and sets on the right Hand of God (Heb 12:2).

Intro Illustration: Text Illustration:

Phillip Yancey said "At last I understood: in the final analysis, forgiveness is an act of faith. By forgiving another, I am trusting that God is a better justice-maker than I am. By forgiving, I release my own right to get even and leave all issues of fairness for God to work out. I leave in God's hands the scales that must balance justice and mercy.

(Yancey, "What's So Amazing About Grace?" p.93)

Read Sermon Text:

1 Peter 3:19-21 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, 20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water. 21 There is also an antitype which now saves us — baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, NKJV

1. Propositions

1 Peter 3:19 by whom also He went and preached to the spirits in prison, NKJV

- a. Who are the spirits in prison?
 - i. Are they Old Testament Saints
 - ii. Are they those who died prior to the flood while the ark was being built?
 - iii. Are they all who have died without faith In Christ and are in hell?
 - iv. *Are they Old Testament Saints*

Abraham believed God according to the promises and new revelation God gave him in Genesis 12 and 15. Prior to Moses, no Scripture was written, but mankind was responsible for what God had revealed. Throughout the Old Testament,

believers came to salvation because they believed that God would someday take care of their sin problem. Today, we look back, believing that He has already taken care of our sins on the cross (John 3:16; Hebrews 9:28). (Read more: <http://www.gotquestions.org/before-Jesus.html#ixzz3WoiVuRqR>)

1. *Are they those who died before the flood while the ark was being built?*

What has changed through the ages is the content of a believer's faith. God's requirement of what must be believed is based on the amount of revelation He has given mankind up to that time. This is called progressive revelation. Adam believed the promise God gave in Genesis 3:15 that the Seed of the woman would conquer Satan. Adam believed Him, demonstrated by the name he gave Eve (v. 20) and the Lord indicated His acceptance immediately by covering them with coats of skin (v. 21). At that point that is all Adam knew, but he believed it. (Read more: <http://www.gotquestions.org/before-Jesus.html#ixzz3WoiVuRqR>)

2. *Are they all who have died without faith In Christ and are in hell?*

3. The third (3rd) explanation of this passage could be that God is not willing that any perish so He (God) sent Jesus into the grave (prison) to give all there a second chance for eternal life.

b. What is the correct interruption?

i. As we look at each of the three (3) positions, each position has a constant and consistent focal point, Jesus is the central focus of each one of them. (1) The old testament saints believed God and it was their faith that save them (Heb 11) very clearly states that is was by "faith" and without faith it is impossible to please God. Heb 11:13 states that "These all died in Faith" they receive the promise even though they didn't see the promise (Jesus) they received their eternal inheritance.

Hebrews 11:13-16 These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off were assured of them, embraced them and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. 14 For those who say such things declare plainly that they seek a homeland. 15 And truly if they had called to mind that country from which they had come out, they would have had opportunity to return. 16 But now they desire a better, that is, a heavenly country. Therefore God is not ashamed to be called their God, for He has prepared a city for them. NKJV

ii. The other two (2) positions imply that God will give all who die without faith in Jesus will have a second chance for eternal life. However the reality is that when a person steps from this life he/she will go to the eternal place that he/she has chosen. Each of the two positions (1) those who lived in the days while Noah was building the ark and those how (2) die without Jesus have had their last opportunity for a life in heaven with God. While God is a God of second chances and the opportunity for salvation ends at physical death and their eternal destination is sealed forever. **Revelation 1:18** states that is Jesus who holds the keys to hell. Without faith the

unbeliever will die in their sins. God's word clearly states "the wages of sin is death" (Rom 6:23) of which there is no second chance after we die.

Revelation 1:18 I am He who lives, and was dead, and behold, I am alive forevermore. Amen. And I have the keys of Hades and of Death. NKJV

John 8:24 Therefore I said to you that you will die in your sins; for if you do not believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." NKJV

Text Illustration: PAID IN FULL

Have you ever wished that someone would pay off all your credit card debt? Zero balances—no payments! The Mount Carmel Missionary Baptist Church in Norfolk, VA is making that wish come true. One Sunday of every month, Bishop C. Vernie Russell Jr., chooses a family from the church to come forward, and the congregation takes up an offering to pay off their debt. Over the last 14 months, this group has collected \$340,000 dollars to rescue 59 of the church's families from debt.

When we come to the Lord's Supper, we remember another debt—a greater debt that no human striving, no double shifts, no church collections could ever repay—our debt of sin.

“When you were dead in your sins ... God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins, having canceled the written code, with its regulations, that was against us ... he took it away, nailing it to the cross.” SOURCE: SermonCentral Staff. Citations: “Manna from Heaven” by Andrea Billups and Laurie Meyers. People Magazine, August 5, 2002. Colossians 2: 13-14

2. Proposals

1 Peter 3:21 There is also an antitype which now saves us — baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, NKJV

While the casual reader of God's word may draw the conclusion that it is the ordinance of "baptism" that is required for a person to claim the inheritance promised by God through Jesus.

a. Baptism

Peter points out that Noah and his family were saved from the flood however Noah built the "ark" it is as a type of Christ. Without the "ark" then Noah and his family would have perished with the others of that day. It was Noah faith in believing God that a flood was coming and that flood would destroy all of mankind. Not only did Noah through faith build the ark but also preached that the flood is coming and people should repent and turn to God, but they did not repent and died in their sins. Baptism is not the saving act but it identifies each believer with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus. The washing of the outward man (1Pet3:21) only cleans the flesh which soon needs to be cleaned again but it the inward man that need to permanently cleansed by the washing of the "Blood of Jesus".

Rev 1:5 and from Jesus Christ, the faithful witness, the firstborn from the dead, and the ruler over the kings of the earth. To Him who loved us and washed us from our sins in His own blood, NKJV

Heb 9:14 how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God? NKJV

Rev 7:14 14 And I said to him, "Sir, you know." So he said to me, "These are the ones who come out of the great tribulation, and washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb. NKJV

Just as in the days of Noah there people who believe that baptism, church membership, good deeds and more will produce a regenerative spiritual heart and other works but James points out that the works of the flesh will not and cannot produce the righteousness of God.

Ephesians 2:9 not of works, lest anyone should boast. NKJV

Paul very clearly states that works are not a saving factor that it is only by Gods grace that we are save through faith in Jesus.

Galatians 2:16 knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law but by faith in Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Christ Jesus, that we might be justified by faith in Christ and not by the works of the law; for by the works of the law no flesh shall be justified. NKJV

Text Illustration: The clearest example that shows the meaning of baptism is a text from the Greek poet and physician Nicander, who lived about 200 B.C. It is a recipe for making pickles and is helpful because it uses both words. Nicander says that in order to make a pickle, the vegetable should first be `dipped` (bapto) into boiling water and then `baptized` (baptizo) in the vinegar solution. Both verbs concern the immersing of vegetables in a solution. But the first is temporary. The second, the act of baptizing the vegetable, produces a permanent change. When used in the New Testament, this word more often refers to our union and identification with Christ than to our water baptism. For example, Mark 16:16. "He that believes and is baptized shall be saved." Christ is saying that mere intellectual assent is not enough. There must be a union with him, a real change, like the vegetable to the pickle!

[From The Online Bible Thayer's Greek Lexicon and Brown Driver & Briggs Hebrew Lexicon, Copyright ©1993, Woodside Bible Fellowship, Ontario, Canada. Licensed from the Institute for Creation Research. Bible Study Magazine, James Montgomery Boice (May, 1989)]

3. Person

1 Peter 3:21 There is also an antitype which now saves us — baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ, NKJV

From this complex passage of scriptures it is clear that (1) Christ is Lord and Redeemer of all who are willing to submit the cleansing blood of Jesus, (2) the trials of our faith makes us stronger in our resolve to follow Jesus and (3) baptism as pictured by the flood and is not that

which saves us but, it is our Identification with the death, burial and resurrection of Jesus and the first act of obedience in a person's life. While it does not save the soul it is that act of obedience that brings us in to a right relationship with our Heavenly Father. Just as a cucumber is immersed into water to clean the outside, water immersion has no effect on the process for it to become a pickle. The cucumber must be immersed into a vinegar/brine solution to which brings the cucumber to being a pickle. So a person identifies with Christ through the ordinance of Baptism and then is immersed into Christ who is the author and the finisher of our faith.