

In Ephesians 1:22-23, the apostle Paul explained the relationship between Jesus Christ and His church. Paul said that God made Christ to be “head over all things to the church, which is His body.” In his writings, Paul often described Christ’s church as His “Body.” The church is to be in subjection to the will of Christ just as our own physical body must be in subjection to our own physical head, the control terminal for the body. The relationship between Christ and His church is obviously very close ... Christ is the head ... the church is the body.

In this Bible Talk, we want to compare the writings of Paul concerning baptism and salvation with his writings about Christ and His church. As we unveil Paul’s teachings about these things, we will better come to understand why Peter so strongly stated that “baptism now saves you” (I Peter 3:21).

First of all, in II Timothy 2:10, Paul said that “salvation ... is **in Christ Jesus** and with it eternal glory.” There is no surprise here, for we have seen in previous Bible Talks that Paul keenly understood the necessity of being “**in Christ**” if we want to be saved. Ephesians 1:7 reads, “**In Him** we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses ... “ In II Corinthians 5:21 Paul said that we can become “the righteousness of God **in Him.**” So ... salvation is **in Christ** and may be found nowhere else. What we need to know is this: “How does one get **into Christ** where salvation is?” In Galatians 3:26-27, Paul answered this question. He said, “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. For all of you who were baptized **into Christ** have clothed yourselves with Christ.” Once again we see the corresponding relationship between faith and baptism. But Paul said that the way **into Christ**, where salvation is, is through baptism. We are baptized **into Christ**, and thus, into His salvation.

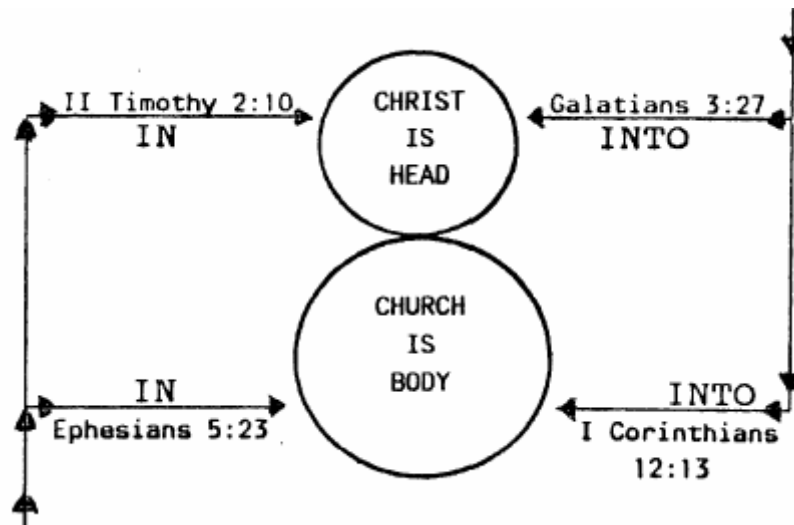
Well now ... seeing that salvation is in Christ, we might well assume that the New Testament would teach that salvation is also in His body (of which He is the head). We would be correct in this, for Paul wrote in Ephesians 5:23 that “Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the **Savior of the body.**” Who will Christ save in the day of judgment? Paul said He is the Savior of the Body, which is His church. Of course, we immediately wonder: “How does one get into the body of Christ?” It is through baptism, as Paul taught in I Corinthians 12:13, “For by one Spirit we were all **baptized into one body**”

Since Christ is the Savior of His Body, and since baptism places one into that body, it seems that baptism is then essential for salvation. Otherwise, one can be saved outside the body of Christ. Likewise, since salvation is in Christ, and baptism places one into Christ, it again seems that baptism is essential for salvation. Otherwise, one can be saved outside of Christ. The teachings of Paul lead one to believe that baptism is very important to salvation. The Apostle Peter said, “Baptism now saves you” (I Peter 3:21). Jesus said, “He who has believed and has been baptized shall be saved” (Mark 16:16). To claim that baptism is not important for salvation is to oppose the teachings of Paul, to deny the statement of Peter, and to reject the clear commandment of Jesus Christ.

In the days of Noah, eight people were saved in the ark. Salvation was a clear issue. One was either in the ark (and saved) or out of the ark (and lost). The matter is just as clear today. One is either in Christ or out ... in His body or out. Baptism is the means by which we enter. If we are IN, then we are saved. If we are OUT, then we are lost. It is just that simple. We must carefully heed the advise of Peter in II Peter 1:10, “Be all the more diligent to make certain about His calling and choosing you.”

BAPTISM

Ephesians 1:22-23



SALVATION

1. According to II Timothy 2:10, Ephesians 1:7, and II Corinthians 5:21, "SALVATION" is found where?
2. Paul taught that the way "into Christ", where salvation is found, is through what? (Galatians 3:27)
3. According to Ephesians 5:23, Christ is the Savior of what?
4. How does one get into the "Body of Christ", of which He is the Savior? (I Corinthians 12:13)
5. Can one be saved outside of Christ; or outside the Body of Christ?

Can one be saved, then, without baptism?
6. How can we compare the salvation of people in Noah's day with people today?