



**SERIES: August / September Series “HE IS ENOUGH”**

**SPEAKER: NAT CRAWFORD**

**Monday, 08/30/2021**

**Scripture: Colossians 2:12**

**TITLE: Who Is Responsible?**

What does it take to experience salvation from God? I’ve heard people say it’s by asking Jesus into your heart. Some people lead others through prayer. Some people say just believe in Christ. Some denominations say it takes partaking in the sacraments. Some suggest salvation can be finalized through baptism. The list of salvific nuances goes on.

The biggest question we need to wrestle with is this: Is salvation earned? Is it partially earned? Or is there something more powerful at work?

The Apostle Paul has the controversial answer for us today in Colossians 2:12 (NLT).

“For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him, you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.”

Baptism is one of those debated topics today amongst Christians. But before we get into this topic, let’s go back one verse.

In verse 11, Paul has just reminded the audience that physical circumcision doesn’t save anyone. It was an outward expression of an inward reality. That’s why in verse 11, Paul says, “When you came to Christ, you were ‘circumcised,’ but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision—the cutting away of your sinful nature.”

We are all born sinful. Our sin nature separates us from God. That’s why Jesus came to earth. He was on a rescue mission. He came to pay our sin debt and reconcile us to Christ according to Colossians 1:21-23.

So now Paul continues the idea of Christ’s work for our salvation by bringing up baptism. Paul says, “For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with him, you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead.”

Paul’s point in verses 11 and 12 is that there is no physical act we can do to save ourselves. Physical circumcision is useless. Water baptism is ineffective for salvation. Some argue that verse 12 is a case for water baptism. But this doesn’t make sense. Paul wasn’t looking to replace one religious activity with another.

Baptism is a picture of the believers' union with Christ. They have been buried with Him in baptism. Water baptism is an outward expression of an inward reality. And, in case you're wondering, it is an act of obedience to Christ. In the great commission, Jesus said to make disciples of all nations and baptize them. So though it has no saving power, it is the loving and obedient response to our Lord and Savior.

Salvation comes through the mighty power of God through Christ Jesus. The same power that raised Christ from the dead is the same power that brings into new life.

So here's my challenge for you today: Pursue loving obedience. If you've never been baptized, contact a pastor or a brother or sister in Christ and do so in a public fashion if possible. I'm amazed by how many people have never made this public declaration. So do so out of loving obedience.

If you have done that, how else do you need to lovingly obey Christ? Not for salvation but for gratitude. Jesus Christ is worthy of all praise, service, and obedience. When we follow Christ with love as the motivation, we will show the world that the game of religions is done and Christ's saving power is real and effective.