

What Makes Me a Christian?
Galatians 3:26-27

Introduction:

- I. In my talks with various people, this is a question that almost always comes up, in one way or another.
 - a. How can I know I'm a Christian? At what point am I a Christian? What must I do to become a Christian?
 - i. All of these questions will be answered as we discuss in detail this morning what makes me a Christian.
 - b. I want to preface this lesson by reading from I Timothy 1:5-7.
 - i. Those mentioned in v. 6-7 want to teach, but do not understand what they are saying. However, the worse thing is that they do not understand the things about which they make confident assertions
 - 1. They are making promises about what the Bible says without understanding it for themselves!!
 - 2. Think of the danger!
- II. Therefore, we start today at the beginning: the birth of Christianity for each person, so that no matter where you might be on this path to salvation, you will know what you need to do to be saved.

Discussion:

- I. What it means to become a Christian is sometimes misunderstood.
 - a. It begins with coming to know the truth (Romans 10:17).
 - i. As a child, I would often “forget” to do my chores or try to avoid doing things that would involve me passing by where my mother would leave me a to-do list. Therefore, when she got home, I could say, “I forgot” or “I didn't know,” and it would work sometimes. However, we cannot do that with God. We MUST know, and we MUST NOT forget what he has commanded!
 - ii. We cannot blame ignorance for our lack of obedience! – Acts 17:30.
 - iii. Hosea 4:6 – My people are destroyed for a lack of knowledge, and because you have forgotten my instruction, I—even I—will forget your children!
 - b. Faith is more than trust, too. It is trust WITH obedience!
 - i. James 2:14-26; Habakkuk 2:4 (live BY faith); II Corinthians 5:7.
 - c. It continues with confessing that faith!
 - i. Romans 10:10 – Confession leads to salvation.
 - ii. I Timothy 6:12 – It is made before witnesses.
 - d. It proceeds to call on the Lord (Romans 10:13).
 - i. But the other steps come first (v. 14).
 - ii. How does this calling on the Lord take place?
 - 1. Acts 22:16 – How is he calling?

2. Psalm 51:10 – a clean heart
 3. Hebrews 10:22 – Sprinkled clean from an evil conscience
 4. I Peter 3:21 – appealing (inquiring or demanding, cf. Psalm 51) to God for a good conscience.
- iii. This means that baptism is the necessary response!
1. Without it we do not have a clean conscience (I Peter 3:21).
 2. Without it we are still in our sins (Acts 22:16).
 3. Without it we are still not dead to our old lives or alive to Christ (Romans 6:3-4)
 - a. AS MANY AS – Means that the number is the same. You cannot be baptized into Christ without dying to your sinful lifestyle, and you cannot put to death your sinful lifestyle without being baptized and thus BURYING it!
 4. Without it we are NOT God’s children (Galatians 3:26-27).
 - a. Faith IN CHRIST? – At first glance, this seems like it’s saying that “faith in Christ” makes us sons of God. However, the Greek construction “in Christ” should modify “you are all sons of God.” The “through faith” leads to the next verse: “for AS MANY AS were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.”
 - b. Faith leads to baptism (Mark 16:16)! Baptism results in moving “into” Christ and putting on Christ. And we are only sons of God if we are IN CHRIST.
 5. Without it we cannot correctly live up to the command of God in I Timothy 1:5
 - a. Love from a pure heart (that was sprinkled clean—Hebrews 10:22)
 - b. A good conscience (That is given after baptism—I Peter 3:21)
 - c. A sincere faith (leads you to baptism—Galatians 3:26-27)