

IT IS SETTLED!

"Fear God, and keep his commandments: for this is the whole duty of man" (Ecclesiastes 12:13b)

By Howell Lasseter

Unbaptized and Unsaved

Last week's column referred to letters received from a reader. We appreciate hearing from readers, and we thank the writer for providing yet another opportunity to discuss things essential to salvation. In his letter, he wrote, "I believe one should be baptized." No doubt many agree with this statement, have heard the statement from "their" preachers, and have taught that the statement is true. Often, the hypothetical question is asked, "What about one who is on his way to be baptized, and has a heart attack and dies? Is he saved?" Let me ask this question: "What about one who is just about ready to believe, and has a heart attack, and dies? Is he saved?"

Let's go again to the example of school teachers. In one's educational process, requirements are set forth if one expects to pass a course. In the lesson plan, the teacher says, "In order to successfully pass this course, there will be a test in math and in social studies.." The student thinks, "I should take the math test," but he considers the math test optional to passing the course, and does not take it. Will the student pass the course if he takes only the social studies test, & omits the math test? Every teacher and every school student in our area knows the answer to that question! Carrying the analogy over to Jesus' command, "*He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.*" If one believes only, considering baptism optional, has he obeyed Jesus?

A point of grammar: all students learn that the conjunction "and" joins words or phrases of equal importance or value. If a parent tells a child to go to the store for a loaf of bread **and** a gallon of milk, it is easy for us to understand that, unless he comes home with both, he has not obeyed the parent. To one who is truly open to, and interested in, what Jesus says, it is equally easy to understand that, in order to obey Jesus, one must believe **and** be baptized. "*He that believeth **and** is baptized shall be saved.*"

The letter-writer challenged us to show where any unbaptized believers were lost. There are several examples; no doubt, many of you readers can cite them. Let's look at one, for truly, one example is all that is needed. First, read Acts 26:1-32. Paul is offering his defense before King Agrippa. He clearly lays out that the prophets foretold of Jesus, and shows Jesus is the fulfillment of prophecies. Especially look at verses 27 & 28: "*King Agrippa, believest thou the prophets? I know thou believest. Then Agrippa said unto Paul, Almost thou persuadest me to be a Christian.*" The inspired apostle Paul tells us Agrippa believed. Was Agrippa saved? Agrippa himself tells us he was not a Christian, and there is no record that he ever became one.

In future articles, we will look at other New Testament examples of unbaptized believers who were unsaved. In preparation for these articles, please read Luke 20:1-8 and Luke 7:29,30.