

Re-reading some earlier GoodNews Letters makes me smile, deeply. Not the writing or the articles but the news at the top of each letter.

Number 261, on April 1st says, "Mariah waits for a donated heart at Stanford Children's Hospital in Palo Alto, Ca."

As I read the above heading, I said, "Thank you, again Lord." Here we are in July and Mariah Yanes is home, swimming and even playing softball. "Thank you, again Lord."

GOODNEWS LETTER
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THE TWO CHURCH
PICTORIAL
ORDINANCES

Baptists have always taught that there are only two PICTORIAL ordinances of the church. Missionary Baptists still hold to this. The two are: **Baptism** and the **Lord's Supper**.

A Scriptural church has many more ORDINANCES; such as, "**forsaking not the assembling of ourselves together**" (Heb 10:25), forgiveness and church authority, to name a few.

What a PICTORIAL ORDINANCE does is to "**show forth**" what a believer has when he experienced faith in Jesus Christ. Thus, these ordinances are means to "**define**" God's salvation. They show what took place in the past when Jesus secured us by His salvation.

Pictorial Ordinances define salvation. Never are they to be understood as initiating salvation. That must be understood; for, **Baptism** and the **Lord's Supper** do not convey initial salvation, in any sense. Baptism does not wash away original sin and the Lord's Supper is memorial, only, reminding us what allowed us to be saved - His body and blood offered at Calvary.

There is some confusion about the real presence of Jesus, today. Baptists have traditionally taught that Jesus is present when the Third Person of the Trinity, the Holy Spirit, enters and indwells.

Therefore, on the day of Pentecost, we see the presence of God as Personal. Here, His real presence entered the 120 baptized believers when they were in the upper room. The Holy Spirit was not representing God; He is God. However, the

Supper is, but a picture that represents Jesus in His saving role of giving His body and shedding His blood.

Further, BAPTISM is a "burial," according to Romans 6:4. Paul said, "**Therefore we are buried with Him by baptism into death:**" And, as we have explained in past issues of the **GoodNews Letter**, NO ONE IS BURIED (literally or pictorially) until a death takes place. One has to be dead before a burial is in order. Otherwise, there would be many objections.

It was breaking God's Law that brought sin entered the world. The Law must be repaired. That meant someone has to die.

But, before one could die for sin, the Law must be upheld and honored. This was the work of Christ and this is how and why salvation comes to man.

Baptism means that we "**died to sin.**" We died when we trusted Jesus as our Savior. By faith, His death was given to us through God's grace. In His death, and only in His death, God dealt with sin.

The perfect life that Jesus lived on earth - without sin - provided an offering for sin. He willingly submitted and gave Himself on Calvary. Because of His love, the rest of those living on earth could be free of sin's debt. By His blood, Jesus would cover the sin of Adam and cover the last man to be born. He died for everyone.

It was then, when Jesus died for sin, **that PEACE BETWEEN MAN AND GOD OCCURED.**

"For it please the Father that in Him (Jesus) should all fulness dwell;
"And having made peace through the blood of His cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself (in heaven and on earth) And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies...yet now hath he reconciled in the **body of His flesh through death,**" Colossians 1:19-22. **Reconciliation comes through His fleshly body.**

Yet, many are saved from condemnation - that is, they shall never enter the lake of fire (where the lost end up). However, salvation does not end once one is saved. Neither does it end after one is baptized. Salvation is a life that God gave to man; one that lives forever.

And, so Paul taught that we are to "**walk in the newness of life.**" Thus, there is a saving element to baptism; which, after one is alive through the death of Christ, he is to seek and walk within the New Life of teachings that come from Jesus.

That's what the church is all about - **walking!** But, Biblical things get muddled when people want to present a PICTURE of the real as the true and real substance of salvation. Missionary Baptist know the difference.

The other picture, that of the Lord's Supper, also explains that we are saved. This pictorial ordinance lines up with the words of Jesus, "**do in remembrance of Me**" (Lk 22:19). If we walk and eat, He lives in us.

In the Supper, Missionary Baptists teach that the body and blood of Jesus is symbolically taken into each believer of the church. The elements used are but representatives His holy, fleshly body.

The bread is unleavened; something that man will never be this side of the resurrection. His blood is represented by "**fruit of the vine.**"

Notice, Jesus said that His disciples were the branches of Him. But, He begins John 15:1 with, "**I am the vine.**" Believers in the church observe the supper by using grape juice or wine to symbolize His precious and sinless blood.

Like each ordinance, faith is ongoing. We are to live out our lives by following His resurrected life and not pay close attention to our secular life. **The order is this:** we are buried and risen with Christ in order that we might represent Him and live for Him in the present, representing Him.

And, nothing shows a deeper and clearer meaning of how we are to live than the two PICTORIAL ORDINANCES. **Baptism** demands that a death precedes a burial. **The Lord's Supper** reveals how we stay in fellowship with Jesus; which is by eating and drinking in His life. Jesus announced, "**I am the bread of life,**" John 6:48.

In both ordinances we see salvation accomplished by His life. But, the representation, the picture never becomes the substance, itself. They only are symbols of the Just One, Jesus.

But, it's a done deal. The Gospel declares that His death, burial and resurrection brought salvation to mankind. We see, indeed, a finished work to be received in the heart, through faith and, then to be shown in PICTURE.