

“THINK ON THESE THINGS”

Philippians 4:8

Preacher Quits Sports!

Author Unknown

1. Every time I went, they asked me for money.
2. The people with whom I had to sit didn't seem friendly.
3. The seats were too hard and not at all comfortable.
4. I went to many games, but the coach never came to call on me.
5. The referee made a decision with which I could not agree.
6. I suspected that I was sitting with some hypocrites – they came to see their friends and what others were wearing rather than to see the game.
7. Some games went into overtime, and I was late getting home.
8. The band played some numbers that I had never heard before.
9. It seems that the games are scheduled when I want to do other things.
10. I was taken to too many games by my parents when I was growing up.

When put in this light, how silly and selfish some of our excuses become for not assembling with the saints to worship God (Heb. 10:25)! If you wouldn't give up your favorite activity for the above reasons, then make sure you don't give up worshipping God because them. After all, shouldn't worshipping God be among our favorite activities? ■

What Is The Purpose Of Baptism?

By Heath Rogers

Many people believe and teach that we are saved without water baptism. They will tell us that baptism is important, and that we should be baptized someday, but it is not necessary for our salvation. Is this true?

If baptism is not necessary for our salvation, what is it for? There is a reason behind everything that God tells us to do. We all understand that baptism is a part of the gospel of Christ. What does the Bible say baptism is for?

1. Saves Us. *“He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned”* (Mark 16:16). Notice, the Lord did not say, *“He who believeth is saved and should be baptized.”* The Lord placed baptism before salvation. Man places it after. The apostle Peter said, *“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us”* (1 Pet. 3:21).

2. Remission of Sins. *“Then Peter said to them, ‘Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit’”* (Acts 2:38). Remission, or forgiveness, of sins comes after baptism, not before.

3. Washes Away Our Sins. *“And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord”* (Acts 22:16). According to this verse, when Ananias found Saul in Damascus, Saul was still in his sins. Yet, we hear people today affirm that Saul was saved on the road to Damascus. How can people be saved from their sins while still being in their sins? That just does not make sense. This verse plainly says that baptism washes away our sins.

4. Contact the Death of Christ. *“Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life”* (Rom. 6:3-4). It was at His death that the blood of Christ was shed. We contact that cleansing blood, shed at His death, through baptism.

5. Places Us in Christ. *“For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ”* (Galatians 3:27). Paul said that every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places was found in Christ, blessings which include the forgiveness of sins (Eph. 1:3, 7). How do we get into Christ? The Bible says we are baptized into Christ.

6. Places Us in the Church. *“For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body”* (1 Cor. 12:13). The church is identified as the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22-23; Col. 1:18). The only way we enter the church is through baptism. Since the church is the body of Christ, the same thing would place us in both.

Think seriously about our question. The Bible plainly identifies the purpose for baptism. Have you been baptized for the remission of your sins? ■



When the Undertaker Died

By Jim Faughn

I was still pretty young when one of the funeral directors in my home town died. To a young mind, that seemed so strange. He was always supposed to be there when other people died. Now, his family needed the services of a funeral director.

Have you ever wondered who cuts your barber's hair? To whom does your doctor go when he gets sick? Who puts the fillings in the teeth of your dentist (in case he doesn't follow the advice he gives you and gets a toothache)?

Those who usually serve need, at times, to be served. This is just as true in the church as it is in the world. Remember that Paul admonishes us, *“Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ”* (Gal. 6:2).

What about the person you usually rely on for support? Do you try to observe moments when you can serve and support him or her? There are those times when they need you, you know. All of us, including the spiritually strong, need somebody to talk with, cry with, laugh with—somebody who has no particular talent other than the ability to care. ■



Don't Push Me!

By Aude McKee

One time I was urging a teenager to obey the gospel of Christ, and she said, “DON'T PUSH, ME!”

A parent told me recently that every time she talked about religion to her daughter, she said, “DON'T PUSH ME!” Sadly, many people have this attitude about becoming a Christian. The next time someone says to me “DON'T PUSH ME!” I will ask them pointedly if they intend to allow the devil to push them into eternal hell – that is exactly what they are doing by rejecting Christ. ■

Service Times - Sunday: 9:00 & 10:00 AM; 6:00 PM - Wednesday: 7:00 PM

Tommy Glendol McClure, Editor and Evangelist - 925-759-4357

Web Site: www.lodicachurchofchrist.com - Email: lodicachurchofchrist@gmail.com - Phone: 209-365-9250