**A Hearing Problem Or A Heart Problem?**

Jarrod Jacobs

There are many that teach that in order to be saved, one must have faith that Jesus is the Son of God, just as John 8:24 teaches. Many agree also that repentance and the confession of our faith in Christ is necessary just as the Bible says in Luke 13:3 and Romans 10:10. However, when we talk about a person being baptized for the remission of sins (Acts 2:38), these same folks will be among many who deny that baptism is necessary. What is the problem? Why do some reject a Bible teaching like baptism, while accepting faith and repentance? Put simply, their problem can be found with either their hearing or their heart. How can we know it is a hearing problem or a heart problem? Let us study Acts 16:14-15 and learn the truth about these serious spiritual problems that some folks face.

In Acts 16:14-15, we read, “And a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, which worshipped God, heard us: whose heart the Lord opened, that she attended unto the things which were spoken of Paul. And when she was baptized, and her household, she besought us, saying, ‘If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there.’ And she constrained us.” Notice that before Lydia was baptized into Christ, she “heard us”, i.e., Paul, Silas, Luke, and Timothy. She heard the teaching of Christ that Paul taught everywhere (I Cor. 4:17). Her hearing the gospel produced faith, and she was baptized for the remission of sin (Rom. 10:17; Mk. 16:16). Notice that not only did she listen to the gospel being spoken, but the words she heard opened her heart. She laid aside all preconceived ideas, and simply listened to God's word. As a result of the words she heard, and her open heart, she was baptized for the remission of sin. Not only this, but we see her “household” or family was also taught the gospel. They believed the message of Christ, and they were baptized for the remission of sin as well. They heard, believed, and obeyed the same message as Lydia, and as a result, became the same thing she had become, a Christian!

Therefore, when people declare that baptism is not necessary for salvation, they could have a hearing problem. It may be that they are listening to the wrong source, and not the Bible. It could mean that they have “closed” their ears to the gospel, but either way, it is a hearing problem. Perhaps some reject baptism because they have a heart problem. Their heart is not open to changing and yielding their will to God’s will. Therefore, they fight against God’s simple command. In contrast with this, friend, let us make sure our hearing is sound and our heart is open to the word of God. Then, let us be people who obey the Lord’s will without fail. Be like Lydia! Be like Noah (Gen. 6:22). Be like those great faith heroes of the New Testament. In so doing, see how your life can be blessed when you follow the Lord’s plan of salvation of faith (Mk. 16:16), repentance (Acts 2:38), confession of Christ (Acts 8:37), and baptism (I Pet. 3:21).

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