

## The Essentiality of Baptism in Acts 2:38 Is Inescapable

By: David Sproule

Contortionists are often a favorite act at a circus, as they often twist themselves into reality-defying shapes and positions. While that is entertaining, it is anything but entertaining when some individuals today are like contortionists when it comes to the subject of the essentiality of baptism for salvation—they twist themselves into reality-defying positions to avoid the truth so plainly taught in Scripture. Let's examine the teaching of one verse—[Acts 2:38](#).

The essentiality of baptism for salvation is the answer that Jesus commanded to give. The reason that Peter included baptism in [Acts 2:38](#) is because Jesus' Great Commission demands baptism to be made a disciple ([Matt. 28:19](#)), to enter a new relationship with God ([Matt. 28:19](#)) and to be saved from sins ([Mark 16:16](#)). Peter could not leave baptism out in response to the question of "What to do" ([Acts 2:37](#)) and be faithful to the requirements given by the Savior and Lord. That's why he preached that baptism must be done "in the name of Jesus Christ"—His authority demands it ([Matt. 28:18](#)).

The essentiality of baptism for salvation is just as essential as the essentiality of repentance. Jesus had also commanded repentance for salvation in the Great Commission ([Luke 24:47](#)). So, under direct guidance of the Holy Spirit ([Acts 2:1-4](#); [John 14:26](#); [16:13](#)), Peter gave heaven's answer to the question, and he used the coordinating conjunction "and" to inseparably tie repentance and baptism together as equally grammatical,

equally weighted, equally essential conditions to obtain forgiveness of sins. One cannot successfully argue that baptism is not essential without logically also removing repentance as essential. God made the two stand or fall together.

The essentiality of baptism for salvation is demanded by the use of the preposition "for." The Holy Spirit chose a specific word to show the God-given purpose of baptism—it is "in order to" obtain the forgiveness of sins. The Greek word "eis" means "motion into a thing, entrance into, purpose, direction toward a goal." Jesus used the very same sentence structure in [Matthew 26:28](#), when He said that His blood was "shed for many for the remission of sins." His blood was NOT shed because sins had already been forgiven (as many want to argue that baptism is done when sins are already forgiven), but Jesus used the same word to say that His blood was being shed "in order to" forgive sins, denoting direction toward a goal, emphasizing the purpose.

To argue that baptism is not essential to obtaining forgiveness of sins requires one to twist himself into positions and arguments that defy the clear teaching of Scripture. Let us stay true to God's Word and simply speak as the Bible speaks.

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# God Is Not a “Heavenly Riddler”

By: Selected

Sometimes I stand in awe of how clearly and simply God reveals truth to us and how often we fail to see it. God loves us so much that He gave His Son to save us, and He is not trying to make the path to heaven hidden in some mystical way. He gives us deep, profound truth about so many things, but He reveals the truth about salvation in words that everyman can understand it.

How could Adam and Eve not understand what God wanted them to do to maintain the amazing relationship with Him inside the Garden of Eden? He told them that they could eat of every tree in that garden except one. The consequences of not doing what He said would be death. He did not hide truth from them. It was so plainly stated.

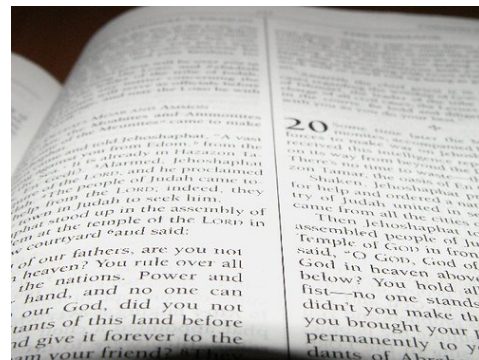
The same is true of His instructions to Noah. He described the ark, giving simple truths about its material, its dimensions, its interior design and the specific number and nature of the animals to be taken into the ark. He is not trying to hide truth, but to reveal it.

If you had been Abraham, would you have been able to understand God when He told him to offer his son as a sacrifice? Take your son, Isaac, to a specific mountain and there burn him as an offering. There may be thoughts we have about this when we first hear the story, but never overlook the fact that God gave simple commands to reveal to Abraham words so simple that even a child can understand them. God is not trying to trick us by hiding truth.

This most important question that we all must face was asked by the prophet Micah in his message to the Jews. “With what shall I come before the Lord, and bow myself

before the High God” (Mic. 6:6). He suggests possible answers which might be given. Should he bring burnt offerings like a young calf? Should he bring thousands of rams? Should he bring ten thousand rivers of oil? Should he bring his son, like Abraham did, to offer him to God as a sacrifice for his sins? His answer to these questions shows what the Jews had left out of their service to God. If you want to know God’s answer, read the rest of that paragraph. God was not trying to hide the answer in a mystical, theologically perceived way. God is not a “Heavenly Riddler” who hides truth. He gives simple answers in simple words that all can understand.

God alone reveals the path to Him. Do you know what He wants you to do? Does He reveal you must believe? What about repentance? What about confessing Jesus? What about baptism? Read His simple answers in Hebrews 11:6; Acts 17:30; Romans 10:9; Acts 2:38; 22:16. What you hear on TV may not be the way. God never gave the sinner’s prayer as the way!



## Upcoming Events

TODAY: Baby shower honoring Candace Drake from 2-4pm here at the building.

May 2-3: Midtown's Challenging the Church with speaker Brant Stubblefield.

Area events:

\*Area events/details are posted on the bulletin board in the hallway. Please check them out.\*

## Prayer List

Prayer Requests:

Veronica Serenil who is recovering from surgery.

Janis Fossati, Willie Fossati's mother and Nancy Fortenberry's sister, who will be having medical tests done.

Lonnie Horton, Benny's brother, who will be having surgery.

Richard Hill who has now gone home from rehab.

### Volunteers Needed

The Sign up sheets for ways to serve for 2026 are on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Please sign up.

### 2026 Pocket Directory

Please review the pocket directory located on the table in the foyer. Please make any corrections or put a check mark by your name if correct. Thank you!

## Service Roster

Week of March 15, 2026

### Sunday Morning

Scripture Reading..... Will Burleson  
Song Leader..... Doug Jobs

Opening Prayer..... Jake Jacobs  
Closing Prayer..... Will Burleson

### Lord's Supper & Offering

Bread..... James Cammock  
Cup..... Clifton Rutherford  
Offering..... Benny Horton  
Assist..... Dan Fielder  
Assist..... Willie Fossati  
Assist..... Bryce Dolan

### Sunday Evening

Song Leader..... Kevin Sheeran

Opening Prayer..... Ken Dorries  
Closing Prayer..... Doug Jobs

Lord's Supper & Offering..... James Cammock/  
Clifton Rutherford

### Wednesday Evening

Adult Class..... Cody McCoy  
Song Leader..... Jack Jobs  
Devotional..... Barry Lehtinen

### Other

Prepare Communion for March..... Craig Dolan

## Congregational News This Week

### Birthdays

Connie Kaspar..... Mar. 19  
Mannie Flonnory..... Mar. 20  
Melani Lehtinen..... Mar. 21

If you have any prayer requests, upcoming events to be announced, or updates/corrections please contact our secretary, Nina Siegel, at (361) 573-0030 or email [office.midtownchurch@gmail.com](mailto:office.midtownchurch@gmail.com)

## Our Elders

Mark FitzSimmons  
Ron White

## Our Deacons

James Cammock—Evangelism  
Lupe Escojido— Benevolence  
Doug Jobes—Safety, Men’s Encouragement &  
Winter Youth Retreat  
Kevin Sheeran—Worship Organization and  
Communication  
Bryant Siegel—Education and Finance

## Our Minister

Cody McCoy

## Weekly Reading

Charm is deceitful and beauty is passing, but a  
woman who fears the Lord, she shall be praised.  
Proverbs 31:30

## Service Times

Sunday Morning Bible Class.....9:00 A.M.  
Sunday Morning Worship.....10:00 A.M.  
Sunday Evening Worship.....5:00 P.M.  
Wednesday Bible Class.....7:00 P.M.

## Attendance Records

Week of March 8, 2026

A.M. Bible Class.....70  
A.M. Worship.....109  
P.M. Worship.....50  
Wednesday Worship.....65

*Financial information is located on the bulletin  
board in the hallway.*

## Supported Works

*Southwest School of Bible Studies*

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