

Baptism & Thief on the Cross

You hear it all the time:

How was “the Thief on the Cross” Saved without being Baptized?

Let’s reduce their argument to absurdity using as learned men call: *reductio ad absurdum* (rɪˈdʌktɪəʊ æd æbˈsɜːdəm)

Which is using Logic as a method of disproving a proposition by showing that Its inevitable consequences are absurd.

Let’s look at the crucifixion of Jesus.

What we have is:

3 Men Crucified - 1 Died in Sin, 1 Died to sin & 1 Died FOR Sin

Luke 23:32-47 And there were also two other, malefactors, led with him to be put to death. 33 And when they were come to the place, which is called Calvary, there they crucified him, and the malefactors, one on the right hand, and the other on the left. 34 Then said Jesus, Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do. And they parted his raiment, and cast lots. 35 And the people stood beholding. And the rulers also with them derided [*him*], saying, He saved others; let him save himself, if he be Christ, the chosen of God. 36 And the soldiers also mocked him, coming to him, and offering him vinegar, 37 And saying, If thou be the king of the Jews, save thyself. 38 And a superscription also was written over him in letters of Greek, and Latin, and Hebrew, **THIS IS THE KING OF THE JEWS.** 39 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. 43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. 44 And it was about the sixth hour, and there was a darkness over all the earth until the ninth hour. 45 And the sun was darkened, and the veil of the temple was rent in the midst. 46 And when Jesus had cried with a loud voice, he said, Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit: and having said thus, he gave up the ghost. 47 Now when the centurion saw what was done, he glorified God, saying, Certainly this was a righteous man.

Let’s look into the heart on the matter

Luke 23:39-42 And one of the malefactors which were hanged railed on him, saying, If thou be Christ, save thyself and us. 40 But the other answering rebuked him, saying, Dost not thou fear God, seeing thou art in the same condemnation? 41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man

hath done nothing amiss. 42 And he said unto Jesus, Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom.

(1) What makes you think he wasn't baptized? Who said he wasn't baptized? Have any of you ever known a back-slider?

Again what makes you think he wasn't baptized cf:

How in God's name from those verses can you derive the authority to belittle, mock, scorn and assure unbelievers they don't need Christian baptism?

How could he have been baptized you say?

Mark 1:4-5 John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. 5 And there went out unto him all the land of Judaea, and they of Jerusalem, and were all baptized of him in the river of Jordan, confessing their sins.

Luke 7:29-30 29 And all the people that heard [him], and the publicans, justified God, being baptized with the baptism of John. 30 But the Pharisees and lawyers rejected the counsel of God against themselves, being not baptized of him.

Matthew 21:24 And Jesus answered and said unto them, I also will ask you one thing, which if ye tell me, I in like wise will tell you by what authority I do these things. 25 The baptism of John, whence was it? from heaven, or of men? And they reasoned with themselves, saying, If we shall say, From heaven; he will say unto us, Why did ye not then believe him? 26 But if we shall say, Of men; we fear the people; for all hold John as a prophet. 27 And they answered Jesus, and said, We cannot tell. And he said unto them, Neither tell I you by what authority I do these things. 28 But what think ye? A [certain] man had two sons; and he came to the first, and said, Son, go work to day in my vineyard. 29 He answered and said, I will not: but afterward he repented, and went. 30 And he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I [go], sir: and went not. 31 Whether of them twain did the will of [his] father? They say unto him, The first. Jesus saith unto them, Verily I say unto you, That the publicans and the harlots go into the kingdom of God before you. 32 For John came unto you in the way of righteousness, and ye believed him not: but the publicans and the harlots believed him: and ye, when ye had seen [it], repented not afterward, that ye might believe him.

John 4: 1-2 When therefore the Lord knew how the Pharisees had heard that Jesus made and baptized more disciples than John, 2 (Though Jesus himself baptized not, but his disciples,)

If the pre-cross baptism of John was that important how about the after the cross Great commission and the fact the first Gospel sermon in Acts 2 commands baptism.

(2) How did he know Jesus was sinless if he knew not John the Baptist, Jesus, the 12 or the 70?

Luke 23:41 And we indeed justly; for we receive the due reward of our deeds: but this man hath done nothing amiss.

Hebrews 4: 15 For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as [*we are, yet*] without sin.

(3) If the Thief on the cross had not been taught about Jesus before how did he know Jesus was Lord? This is the most sacred title to the Jews a word they would not even write or pronounce but substituted YHWY without vowels. Peter said in the first Gospel sermon Cf:

Acts 2: 36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ.

(4) If the thief on the cross had not been taught about Jesus how did he know about the coming Kingdom of God?

Matthew 3:1 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Matthew 4:17 From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

Luke 10:1 After these things the Lord appointed other seventy also, and sent them two and two before his face into every city and place, whither he himself would come. ...

Luke 10:9 And heal the sick that are therein, and say unto them, The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you.

(5) Under what dispensation did the thief on the cross die?

The thief on the cross died under the Law of Moses?

Was baptism for the remission of sins a law or ordinance under the Old Testament Law? No.

Had Jesus died yet when he said: “ this day thou shalt be with me in paradise”?

Colossians 2:13-14 And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses; **14** Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;

Hebrews 9:16-17 For where a testament [*is*], there must also of necessity be the death of the testator. **17** For a testament [*is*] of force after men are dead: otherwise it is of no strength at all while the testator liveth

Baptism for the remission of sins was not yet an ordinance under the law of Moses ... only ritualistic washings for the priesthood and the people cleansing from some impurity.

Immersion was required to enter the temple mount.

Christ had not yet died for our sins the perfect sacrifice when He pardoned him such as the pardoning of the sinful woman.

Here are some examples of Jesus forgiving sins under the Law of Moses

Luke 7:37-38 & 47-49 And, behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that [*Jesus*] sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, **38** And stood at his feet behind [*him*] weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe [*them*] with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed [*them*] with the ointment. ...

Luke 7:47 Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, [*the same*] loveth little. **48** And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. **49** And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? **50** And he said to the woman, Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace.

Another example is the man sick with the palsy

Matthew 9:2-7 And, behold, they brought to him a man sick of the palsy, lying on a bed: and Jesus seeing their faith said unto the sick of the palsy; Son, be of good cheer; thy sins be forgiven thee. **3** And, behold, certain of the scribes said within themselves, This [*man*] blasphemeth. **4** And Jesus knowing their thoughts said, Wherefore think ye evil in your hearts? **5** For whether is easier, to say, [*Thy*] sins be forgiven thee; or to say, Arise, and walk? **6** But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (then saith he to the sick of the palsy,) Arise, take up thy bed, and go unto thine house. **7** And he arose, and departed to his house.

**(6) The Thief on the cross could not obey the Great Commission that is not yet given. It will be at least 43 more days before the great commission is given
But you can obey the Great Commission cf:**

**Matthew 28:18-20 And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:²
20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, [*even*] unto the end of the world. Amen.**

Mark 16:15-20 And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16 He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned ...19 So then after the Lord had spoken unto them, he was received up into heaven, and sat on the right hand of God.20 And they went forth, and preached every where, the Lord working with [*them*], and confirming the word with signs following. Amen.

Luke 24:44-49 And he said unto them, These [*are*] the words which I spake unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must be fulfilled, which were written in the law of Moses, and [*in*] the prophets, and [*in*] the psalms, concerning me. 45 Then opened he their understanding, that they might understand the scriptures, 46 And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: 47 And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 And ye are witnesses of these things. 49 And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high.

Acts 2:37-39 Now when they heard [*this*], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [*and*] brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [*even*] as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Mark 16:16 Jesus Said: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, he that believeth not shall be damned Mark 16:16

Our Catholic friends who practice infant baptism teach: he that is baptized and is saved shall one day when he grows up believe.

Our Baptist friends teach: he that believeth and is saved should be baptized.

Universalists teach: he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, and he that believeth not, shall be saved also.

(7) The preponderance of the evidence in the Book of Acts which is the History of the early Church and the first Christians shows the importance of baptism

Beware of the scripture twisters and spell-binders.

Read Acts 2:1-47 and understand the new covenant which was preached the day the Kingdom came into being and the Church of Christ began cf: Romans 16:16.

Baptism and believe are words that are often used as a syn·ec·do·che which is a figure of speech in which a part is made to represent the whole or vice versa: as in Cleveland won by six runs (meaning “Cleveland’s baseball team”).

I like your wheels man, ... meaning I like your car.

I’m just working to put a roof over my head meaning a whole house.

Acts 2:37-39 Now when they heard [*this*], they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men [*and*] brethren, what shall we do? 38 Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost. 39 For the promise is unto you, and to your children, and to all that are afar off, [*even*] as many as the Lord our God shall call.

Acts 8:5-6 Then Philip went down to the city of Samaria, and preached Christ unto them. 6 And the people with one accord gave heed unto those things which Philip spake, hearing and seeing the miracles which he did. ...

Acts 8:12-13 But when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the kingdom of God, and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. 13 Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done.

Acts 8:26-39 And the angel of the Lord spake unto Philip, saying, Arise, and go toward the south unto the way that goeth down from Jerusalem unto Gaza, which is desert. 27 And he arose and went: and, behold, a man of Ethiopia, an eunuch of great authority under Candace queen of the Ethiopians, who had the charge of all her treasure, and had come to Jerusalem for to worship, 28 Was returning, and

sitting in his chariot read Esaias the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said unto Philip, Go near, and join thyself to this chariot. 30 And Philip ran thither to [*him*], and heard him read the prophet Esaias, and said, Understandest thou what thou readest? 31 And he said, How can I, except some man should guide me? And he desired Philip that he would come up and sit with him. 32 The place of the scripture which he read was this, He was led as a sheep to the slaughter; and like a lamb dumb before his shearer, so opened he not his mouth: 33 In his humiliation his judgment was taken away: and who shall declare his generation? for his life is taken from the earth. 34 And the eunuch answered Philip, and said, I pray thee, of whom speaketh the prophet this? of himself, or of some other man? 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and began at the same scripture, and preached unto him Jesus. 36 And as they went on [*their*] way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, [*here is*] water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37 And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39 And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.

Acts 9: 3 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: 4 And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? 5 And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: [*it is*] hard for thee to kick against the pricks. 6 And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? And the Lord [*said*] unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do. 7 And the men which journeyed with him stood speechless, hearing a voice, but seeing no man. 8 And Saul arose from the earth; and when his eyes were opened, he saw no man: but they led him by the hand, and brought [*him*] into Damascus. 9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink. 10 And there was a certain disciple at Damascus, named Ananias; and to him said the Lord in a vision, Ananias. And he said, Behold, I [*am here*], Lord. 11 And the Lord [*said*] unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for [*one*] called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth, 12 And hath seen in a vision a man named Ananias coming in, and putting [*his*] hand on him, that he might receive his sight. 13 Then Ananias answered, Lord, I have heard by many of this man, how much evil he hath done to thy saints at Jerusalem: 14 And here he hath authority from the chief priests to bind all that call on thy name. 15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: 16 For I will shew him how great things he must suffer for my name's sake. 17 And Ananias went his way, and

entered into the house; and putting his hands on him said, Brother Saul, the Lord, [even] Jesus, that appeared unto thee in the way as thou camest, hath sent me, that thou mightest receive thy sight, and be filled with the Holy Ghost. 18 And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was baptized.

People today say: “Just “believe” and you are saved”.

Others say you gotta pray your way through: “just say the sinners prayer”

Where did that idea come from? It came from men like: Eleazar Wheelock, Charles Finney, Dwight Moody and Billy Sunday all wanted to make “the salvation experience easier so more people can be saved” These men were followed by Billy Graham. Jesus said:

Matthew 15:9 But in vain they do worship me, teaching [for] doctrines the commandments of men.

Did Paul believe? He called Jesus Lord in V:5 and Jesus told him He was Jesus.

Did Paul try to pray his way through. Yes, he added fasting to praying.

Acts 9:9 And he was three days without sight, and neither did eat nor drink.

Acts 9:11 And the Lord [said] unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for [one] called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, he prayeth,

He had prayed for 3 days was he saved? Can you be saved with your sins?

In Paul’s own account he says the prophet told him he still had his sins cf:

Acts 22:13-16 Came unto me, and stood, and said unto me, Brother Saul, receive thy sight. And the same hour I looked up upon him. 14 And he said, The God of our fathers hath chosen thee, that thou shouldest know his will, and see that Just One, and shouldest hear the voice of his mouth. 15 For thou shalt be his witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. 16 And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

Acts 10:34 Then Peter opened [his] mouth, and said, Of a truth I perceive that God is no respecter of persons: ... (Peter then preaches the Gospel to them)

Acts 10:44-48 While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Ghost fell on all them which heard the word. 45 And they of the circumcision which believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost. 46 For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God. Then answered Peter, 47 Can any man forbid water, that these should not be baptized, which have received the Holy Ghost as well as we? 48

And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then prayed they him to tarry certain days.

Acts 16:14-15 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. 15 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.

Acts 16:25-33 And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God: and the prisoners heard them. 26 And suddenly there was a great earthquake, so that the foundations of the prison were shaken: and immediately all the doors were opened, and every one's bands were loosed. 27 And the keeper of the prison awaking out of his sleep, and seeing the prison doors open, he drew out his sword, and would have killed himself, supposing that the prisoners had been fled. 28 But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, Do thyself no harm: for we are all here. 29 Then he called for a light, and sprang in, and came trembling, and fell down before Paul and Silas, 30 And brought them out, and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? 31 And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house. 32 And they spake unto him the word of the Lord, and to all that were in his house. 33 And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed [*their*] stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, straightway.

Acts 18:1& 7-8 After these things Paul departed from Athens, and came to Corinth; ...

7 And he departed thence, and entered into a certain [*man's*] house, named Justus, [*one*] that worshipped God, whose house joined hard to the synagogue. **8** And Crispus, the chief ruler of the synagogue, believed on the Lord with all his house; and many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized.

Acts 19:1-5 And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples, **2** He said unto them, Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed? And they said unto him, We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost. **3** And he said unto them, Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism. **4** Then said Paul, John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people, that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. **5** When they heard [*this*], they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

Sources: KJV, theWord.com,