

Upcoming Events

Mike Odorizzi (Winnetka Ave) will preach for us
on February 23

Business Meeting: Today at 4:30 p.m.

Ladies Bible Class: Today at 4:00 p.m.

Last Saturday in February Meeting: February 29

Panera Bread Open Bible Study: Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Thank you, brother Borland!

The Gospel: Death, Burial, and Resurrection

1 Corinthians 15:1-4

“Now I make known to you, brethren, the gospel which I preached to you, which also you received, in which also you stand, by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures.”

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Sunday.....6:00 p.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

Preacher:
(Vacant)

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Baptism: Death, Burial, and Resurrection

By Joe Slater

For whatever reasons, religious people disagree on just about everything having to do with baptism. Confusion reigns, indicating that satan has done his homework well (while we, perhaps, have been preoccupied with more “sophisticated” matters). Just what does the Bible say on the subject? In his letters to Rome and Colosse, Paul taught that in baptism, we identify with, and receive the benefits of, the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

Sin makes us spiritually dead. “*The wages of sin is death*” (Romans 6:23). Before becoming Christians, the Colossians had been “*dead in (their) trespasses*” (Colossians 2:13). Though alive physically, they were separated from God by their sins.

As they obeyed the gospel of Jesus, however, they were “*buried with Him in baptism*” (Colossians 2:12). Just as Jesus, having died, was buried in Joseph of Arimathea’s tomb, so these who were dead in sin were buried as they were plunged under the water.

Romans 6:4 gives an additional detail – they were “*buried with Him through baptism into death.*” Yes, they were baptized into death. But wait! Didn’t we just read that they were already dead in sin before baptism? Why, then, were they baptized into death? Because the death into which they were baptized was a death to sin (see Romans 6:2). That is, in baptism they terminated their relationship with sin. So remember: before baptism, they were dead in sin; while buried in baptism they died to sin.

Thus far we have seen baptism's identity with Jesus' death and burial. What about the resurrection? Romans 6:4 says *"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."* Likewise, Colossians 2:12, after speaking of baptism as a burial, says that *"you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God who raised Him from the dead."* Just as Jesus came forth from the tomb, triumphant over sin and death, so we come forth from baptism cleansed from sin by His blood, alive from the dead (spiritually), not by our own merit, but by faith in the working of God.

Is baptism essential? It is only as essential as dying to sin; only as necessary as being raised with Jesus to live a new life; only as indispensable as identifying with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

Maybe I'm naive, but I really don't understand what all the controversy is about.

Have We Stolen Heaven's Incense?

By Dan Jenkins

Is there anything more touching than the following story? She sits alone in one of the finest houses to be found. Her husband is dead. He had been so successful and provided for her and her needs after his death. Her phone is by her side, but it rarely rings. Her children never call. She would give anything to hear from them. She sits there waiting, but it never rings. Is there a scene more tragic? Consider the following spiritual parallel to this situation of loneliness.

The God of heaven and earth sits in heaven waiting to hear from His children. He would give anything to just hear from them. He knows they have needs, even though they may not realize it. He is ready to help, but they do not call. He made an amazing promise to them, *"If we know that He hears us, whatever we ask, we know we have the petitions that we ask of Him"* (1 John 5:15). Yet, they

do not call. Beloved in Christ, is God's heart heavy because we do not call?

There is an amazing picture in the figurative language of the book of Revelation. God sits on His throne. When the Lamb of God comes before our awesome God, heaven explodes with worship of the Lamb. There are those twenty-four elders who have harps in their hands, but they also have bowls filled with incense. Immediately, heaven is filled with the aroma of that incense as the elders fall down before the Lamb, and golden bowls filled with incense become part of the heavenly joy and adoration of Jesus (Revelation 5:8-9).

That incense is mentioned again in this book. In chapter six, the saints of God are calling out to God to respond and bring His judgment on those who are persecuting the church. They are told God will respond very soon. In chapter eight, He does. An angel comes to God with incense in a censer. He adds fire from heaven's altar, and the wrath of God is poured out on the earth. The saints of God have called out for God to act, and He responded.

What does that have to do with the church? Take a look at God's description of that heavenly incense of the praise of Jesus. Look at what is part of the incense which caused God to come to the rescue of those suffering saints. The bowls in the hands of the elders are full of incense. The Bible tells us exactly what the incense is—it is *"....the prayers of the saints"* (Revelation 5:8).

What does that have to do with us individually? Imagine those elders about to praise the Lord, and there is no incense because we are not praying! Our lack of praying to heaven robs it of the praise that is around the throne.

God sits in heaven longing for us to call out to Him. He sits there awaiting our incense to fill heaven with its aroma, but there is none! Is there anything more tragic?