

“WHY ARE YOU WAITING?”

Acts 22:16

A couple days ago, I was studying with a friend who was asking for clarity about baptism which I was happy to provide, and after explaining it, he inquired further, asking questions that deserve answers. When we get to the bottom of those answers, though, we need to be satisfied and answer a question Ananias asked Saul: *“Why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized!”*

I. WHAT ABOUT THE THIEF ON THE CROSS?

A. Luke 23:39-43

Because Jesus promised Paradise to this man without mention of baptism, it is presumed baptism is not necessary for us.

B. Matthew 9:6

The fact is that Jesus had power on earth to forgive sins, but He is not on earth now, so we need to go with the words He left behind for us.

C. Mark 1:4-5

It is entirely within the realm of possibility that the thief had, previously, been baptized into John’s baptism, so it is presumptuous to conclude definitively that he was not.

D. Acts 19:3-5

Of course, those who received John’s baptism would later need to be baptized again in Christ’s name because things had changed... and that is very much the point.

E. Romans 6:3-6

The baptism that is presently effective is into Christ’s death and that had not yet occurred when Jesus promised the thief Paradise.

F. Hebrews 9:16-17

Jesus' death activated His testament. It wasn't in force prior to that, but now it is!

II. WASN'T SAUL SAVED ON THE ROAD TO DAMASCUS?

A. **Acts 22:1-16**

No, he was not! Rather, on the road to Damascus, Saul asked, *"What shall I do, Lord?"* and Jesus replied, *"Go into Damascus and there you will be told"* (10). All he was told was, *"Arise and be baptized"*(16)!

B. **Acts 9:1-18**

In a parallel account, it is recorded that Saul did obey Ananias's instruction, being baptized (18).

III. WHAT IF THERE'S NO WATER AROUND, LIKE IN THE DESERT?

A. **John 3:23**

It certainly is easier to keep a bunch of water handy if we plan to do a lot of baptizing, but given the spontaneity of the action, that may not always be feasible.

B. Keep in mind, however, that life cannot exist in the absence of water, so no person would ever be far removed from it.

C. **Acts 8:26-38**

When Philip taught the treasurer of Ethiopia, they were in the *"desert"* (26), but the student was still able to observe, *"Here is water"* (36)!