

Baptismal Class 4 of 6

How to Get into God's Family

#1042

Study given by W.D. Frazee—August 6, 1962

[Tape started in progress.]

I tell you what we're like. We're just like those people back there in the days when Christ was on earth that carried the people in to Jesus, but it was Jesus that did the work.

Do you suppose we could heal that person? Why, no. Could we open blind eyes? No. Could we raise the dead? No, no. Jesus must do that. And that's why you notice that in this class every lesson I'm seeking to get your eyes on Jesus, on Jesus, because He's the one to do all this for you.

Now, that doesn't mean that when you're baptized you'll already have everything that's ever going to be done for you done. Oh, no. Baptism is not the end of the Christian life, it's the beginning, but we want to be sure it's begun.

You know, when a baby's born, then it grows and grows and grows, and finally grows up to be a full-sized man or woman. But if it's born dead, how long is it going to take it to grow up? Well, a hundred years wouldn't be long enough, would it? Why, no.

And baptism is like a new birth. That's what it is. And I want to be sure that every one of you is born alive—alive to God. Baptism closes the old life and begins the new life. And if you're born alive, alive to God, then you'll just keep growing, getting more like Jesus.

Just like a child is more like his father and mother in size and shape and in thought, as time goes on, so you will become more and more like your Heavenly Father as you grow up to be like Him. But the beginning must be right, and that's why I'm just so glad that we can study these things together of what it means.

All right. Now, tonight we have another very precious lesson. And I want you to turn to 1 Corinthians, the 12th chapter, and the 13th verse, and we're going to learn something more about baptism. Here is something wonderful. 1 Corinthians 12:13.

Let's read it together:

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit” 1 Corinthians 12:13.

All right. Now, let us notice what this says about baptism. We are all baptized *into* what? Into one body. All right.

Now, a few questions, as you look at that. Where are we before we're baptized, as far as this verse is concerned? If we're baptized into one body, where are we before we're baptized? Outside that body. That's right. You all see that, don't you? We're baptized into it, yes.

Now, the next question: Where are we *after* we're baptized? We're *inside* the body. Is that clear? Yes. All right.

Now, the third question: How do we get into that body? By baptism, because it says, "We are all baptized into one body."

Now, do you see those three things in the text? Look at it again. Let's read it together:

"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body..."
Ibid.

That's enough. We're all baptized into one body. Where are we before we're baptized? *Outside* that body. Where are we after we're baptized? *Inside*. And how do we get into the body? By baptism. We're baptized into it.

Well, if that's so, and we are preparing for baptism, would it be a good thing for us to find out what that body is that we're baptized into? Yes. All right. Now, we'll find out.

Let's go over to Ephesians. That's just a few pages to the right. Just turn over here to Ephesians, the first chapter—I think we'll go to Colossians, just a few more pages over. Colossians, the first chapter, and the 18th verse. Colossians 1:18.

As you look at that verse, tell me, what is the body? The church. That's right. Now, does this body have a head? Who is He? Jesus. Now, to find out that, you'd have to go back to the 13th verse. It says that God has:

"...delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son" Colossians 1:13.

And then all the rest is talking about this dear Son, Jesus.

Fourteenth verse:

"...we have redemption through His blood, even the forgiveness of sins" *Ibid.*, verse 14.

The 16th verse says, Everything was created by Him. The 17th verse: He, this dear Son, Jesus:

“...is before all things, and by Him all things consist” *Ibid.*,
verse 17.

And now, the 18th verse, He, this One that made all things and that redeemed us by His blood—He is what? The head of the body. And what is it? The church.

All right. Now, let’s read those lines together:

“And He is the head of the body, the church...” *Ibid.*,
verse 18.

Once again:

“And He is the head of the body, the church...” *Ibid.*

Now, I want to ask you something. How many heads would a body have? One. All right. How many bodies would a head have? One. Isn’t that right? Yes. That’s simple.

So the church has one head, and that head is who? Christ. You see, that’s where the Roman Catholic Church is mistaken. They have a man over there in the Vatican that’s the head of the church. Now, it’s true he says he acts in Christ’s stead, but the Lord never turned His church over to any human being and made that man the head of the church. He reserved that for Himself.

And, you know, it’s a wonderful thing to be connected with an organization whose head is where? In heaven. And what is that organization whose head is in heaven? The church, yes. And how do you get into it? By baptism. That’s right.

You know, many years ago, a woman came to me and she said, “Now, I’d like to have you baptize me but I don’t want to join any church.” Well, she didn’t understand this, of course. She’d just read in the Bible that everybody ought to be baptized, and she thought she should be baptized.

Well, of course, when I began to study it with her, I explained it to her, it was something like wanting to go through a door without getting into a room. Baptism is the door into what? The door into the church. And what a strange thing it would be to say, “Now, I’d like to go through that door but I don’t want to get in the room.” As I say, she didn’t understand, but she understood later when we’d studied it together.

So baptism, you see, is not merely an *act* to be performed. It’s an *experience* to enter into. To change the figure, wouldn’t it be a strange thing for a person to say, “Well, now, I’d like to be married. I want to go through the wedding ceremony, but I don’t want to live with the person that I stand up there with. I want to go through the ceremony but I don’t want to really spend any time with them after that, you see.”

The purpose of the wedding is to make it possible for those two people to spend the rest of their lives together, isn’t it? That’s right. And baptism is something like that. In baptism, we are joined with Christ forever, and Christ, as the head, is in

heaven, but the body is where? Right here in this world. And the body is what? The church. Oh, I'm so glad for that.

Now, would it make any difference, friends, if that's so, what church we were baptized into? Yes. Let's go to Ephesians, the fourth chapter, verses 4 and 5. Ephesians 4, verses 4 and 5. Just back a few pages.

How many bodies are there? One. Yes. And how many baptisms, in the fifth verse? One baptism. Let's read these verses together:

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism”
Ephesians 4:4-5.

You notice that “one” over and over again. There's one head, there's one body, one Lord, one faith, one baptism. Well now, then, I ask you, before a person is baptized, should he find, and be certain of it, the one true church of Christ? Should he? Why, sure.

If I believed the Roman Catholic Church was the one true church of Christ, I'd want to be baptized into the Roman Catholic Church, wouldn't you? But if I didn't believe it, then I certainly wouldn't want a Roman Catholic priest to baptize me because I want to be baptized into God's true church.

Now, there are many churches in the world, dozens of them, scores of them, and they all claim to be God's church, and how can we tell from the Bible which is the true church?

Well, I think you all have studied that some, but I'd just like to review that with you because that's very important. Let's go over to Revelation, the 12th chapter. Revelation, the 12th chapter.

Now, may I say, if any of you, you older people or the children, either one—if you have any question about this or any doubts in your mind, you should let us give you a special study on this one subject of which is the true church. And, as I say, I think you all are clear on it, but don't have anything shaky or doubtful in your mind about it because it's very important.

Now, this 12th chapter of Revelation, you remember, is the history of the church from the days of Jesus to the end of time. The church is represented here in Revelation 12, beginning with the first verse and all the way through, under the symbol of a what? A woman. That's right. A woman.

And she's clothed with the sun and so forth. The early verses tell about the early part of the church, when Jesus was born, and when He went to heaven—that's the fifth verse—His ascension. And then, the 6th verse tells about the long period of persecution when for over a thousand years she had to be in the wilderness. That's spoken of again in the 13th and 14th verses.

And then, finally, as we come down to the 17th verse, the last verse, we have the last, the remnant, of the church. Let's read that verse together. Revelation 12:17:

“And the dragon was wroth with the woman, and went to make war with the remnant of her seed, which keep the commandments of God, and have the testimony of Jesus Christ” Revelation 12:17.

The remnant, or the last, of the children of the church will keep what? They'll keep the commandments of God and have what? The testimony of Jesus Christ.

Now, let me ask you, friends. If the true church keeps the commandments of God, how many would they keep? Well, they'd keep them all, wouldn't they, because—put down in your notes, we won't turn to it, but James 2:10 says that to break one point is to be guilty of what? All. Well, you can see that would be true.

If there was something hanging here from this ceiling by a chain with 10 links, and I should break one of those links, what would happen? It would fall, just the same as if they all broke, wouldn't it? That's right.

To be obedient, the church must be a church that keeps how many of the commandments? Ten of them. That's right.

Now, what is this special commandment that God has set forth as His sign? The Sabbath commandment, the Fourth Commandment. And so, the true church will be especially distinguished by that Fourth Commandment. All right. They keep all the commandments.

Now, they have something. What is it? The testimony of Jesus. And what is the testimony of Jesus? The Spirit of Prophecy. And let's turn over and read that in Revelation 19:10 so that we have that fresh in our minds.

This was the time, you know, when John was so overwhelmed with the wonderful revelation that the angel Gabriel had brought him that he says in that 10th verse, he fell at his feet to worship him.

What did the angel say? See thou do it not. All right. Now, let's read that—what the angel said. Revelation 19:10:

“...See thou do it not: I am thy fellowservant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus: worship God: for the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy” Revelation 19:10.

What is the testimony of Jesus? The Spirit of Prophecy. Well, you know, dear folks, I'm just simple-minded enough, then, to believe that, when I find a church here in these last days that keeps all of God's commandments, including the Sabbath, and has the testimony of Jesus, which is the Spirit of Prophecy, that I have found God's true church. Just that simple. Just as simple as can be.

And here is the amazing thing. Almost every church today admits that they have no command from God to keep the day they're keeping. Now, they have what they call their reasons, but my point is, whatever the reason, this text doesn't say that they have reasons for not keeping the commandments of God. It says they keep them. Do you see what I mean?

Almost every church admits that it's not keeping those commandments that God wrote on the stone. Well, I'm not looking for a church that has excuses for why they don't. I'm looking for one that keeps them and, thank God, I found it.

But now, notice that next point. They have what? The testimony of Jesus, which is what? The Spirit of Prophecy. And there's another interesting thing. Do you know that most every church in this world today—they would frankly tell you that they have no Spirit of Prophecy. The Catholic church doesn't claim to have it. The great protestant churches, if you would ask them, "Do you have the Spirit of Prophecy?", "Why, no, that was back there in Bible times. We don't have that today."

And so, really, it's not so hard to find the church that this is talking about. There is a church which keeps all of God's commandments, including the Sabbath, and has the Spirit of Prophecy, the testimony of Jesus.

Now, if you've found that and you know that's the truth, well then, you're ready, you see, to be baptized into *that* church, so it isn't just a matter of being baptized by somebody somewhere. The text says we're baptized into what? Into one body, and that one body is the church.

Now, let's see some of the reasons why that's so important. Let's go over to the book of Acts again, and I want you to notice something very interesting here. In the ninth chapter of Acts.

Now, you remember, this is the story of the conversion of Saul. What was Saul's name later on? Paul. That's right. He became the great apostle to the gentiles. And you remember, he started out as a persecutor. He was trying to kill off all the Christians. But the Lord met him on the road to Damascus and changed his mind.

Fourth verse:

"And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou Me? 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" Acts 9:4-5.

Who was talking to Paul? Jesus was talking to Him. All right.

Now, let's read together that sixth verse. This is wonderful:

“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”
Ibid., verse 6.

Well, isn't that interesting. Who was talking to Saul? Jesus was talking to him. And He gets his attention. He gets him to the point where he's willing to listen. And Saul says, Now, Lord, what do you want me to do? And does Jesus tell him? Why, no. He says, you go into the city and they'll tell you what to do.

Isn't that interesting. Isn't that interesting. Now, I wonder who he was to meet. Well, if you read on, in the 10th verse, it says:

“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. 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” Acts 9:10-11.

Now, see, here's Saul coming. Jesus stops him and gets him to listen, and gets him to the point where he's willing to do what God wants him to do. But does Jesus tell him all that he's to do? Why, no. He says, you go on into the city and they'll tell you what to do.

And now, having done that, Jesus goes over here to the church, and there's one of the disciples named Ananias, and Ananias, he said, you go to the street called Straight. And, you know, that old city in Damascus still has that street called Straight over there. That's right. Right there. Right there at that house where Saul was met.

All right. So he said to Ananias, you go and tell him what to do. Isn't that wonderful. Now, I want to ask you something. Do you see that in coming to the church, there might be something somewhere along the line that Jesus would want the church to teach us? Why, yes.

Haven't we already learned a lot by coming to the church? Now, don't misunderstand me. That doesn't mean we should take the church instead of God or the church instead of the Bible. That's where the Roman Catholic Church got off, you see. They claim people ought to listen to the church even when it's against the Bible.

But the true church will teach the truth. It'll not teach men *away* from the Bible, it'll lead them *to* the Bible. But my point is, Jesus taught Saul to come to that church and *listen* to what the church said. All right.

Now, read the 17th verse. All together:

“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” *Ibid.*, verse 17.

Thank God, friends. He listened to the message. And so, it says:

“And immediately there fell from his eyes as it had been scales: and he received sight forthwith, and arose, and was...”

What?

“...baptized” *Ibid.*, verse 18.

Did Jesus tell him out there on the road to Damascus, to be baptized? No. Who told him that? Why, Ananias must have told him. In fact, I know he told him. Turn over to Acts 22 and you’ll see he did. But Jesus could have told him, but Jesus had given that job to His church on earth and Christ respected His church.

Acts 22. Well, you put down in your notes verses 6-16. We won’t read all that. Paul here is telling the story, years later. He’s telling the story of his conversion.

All right. Now, we’re in the 22nd chapter, and as I say, here’s Paul telling the same story years later—what happened to him and how the Lord spoke to him.

Tenth verse:

“...the Lord said unto me, Arise, and go into Damascus; and there it shall be told thee of all things which are appointed for thee to do” Acts 22:10.

Paul hadn’t forgotten it, had he? And so he came on into Damascus.

Twelfth verse, Ananias came to him. And the 14th verse tells what Ananias told him (this is Ananias talking to Paul):

“And he said”—this is Ananias, talking to Paul—“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. For thou shalt be His witness unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard. And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on the name of the Lord” Acts 22:14-16.

Who told him to be baptized? Ananias did. Now, Ananias didn’t make that up. Jesus had sent His church into the world to teach and baptize, hadn’t He? And the purpose—watch this point—the purpose of the vision that Saul got there wasn’t to take the place of what God had told the church to teach. God knew that Saul was

in such a state of mind that he wouldn't listen to any *man*, and in mercy, Jesus, you might say, arrested him. He shook him up so that he'd listen.

But just as soon as he got him to that point where he'd bow his head and listen, and he said, Well now, Lord, what do you want me to do, Go to my church. They'll tell you what to do. I've given them the job of teaching. You go there.

And so he went in there and listened, and he believed and was what? Baptized. He was a member of the church always from then on and became, finally, a preacher in that church, an apostle, and went out to preach to others.

Now, you see, dear friends, how important, then, it is to come to the right church so you listen to the right thing. Now, I want you to see how Jesus thinks it's important to listen to the church. Matthew, the 18th chapter. Matthew 18. All right. Verses 15 to 17.

Now, here Jesus is telling his disciples what to do to keep peace and harmony in the church:

“Moreover if thy brother shall trespass against thee, go and tell him his fault between thee and him alone: if he shall hear thee, thou hast gained thy brother” Matthew 18:15.

Can people even in the church have disagreements? Why, yes. Now, dear ones, I often tell those who are getting ready for baptism, you're coming into a perfect church, but there are a lot of imperfect people in it. That's right. That's right. And imperfect people will disappoint you because you look for perfection, and you *ought* to look for perfection. That's what Jesus looks for.

And Jesus is disappointed whenever His people fail. You may be disappointed in other people. You might be disappointed in yourself sometimes. Somebody else might be disappointed in you.

But now, think of it, if you'd been back there in the days of Jesus: did Jesus have any church man by the name of Peter? Was Peter a member of the church? Was he an officer in the church? Was he a minister in the church? Was he one of the leading ones? Yes. Well, did Peter lose his temper one night? Did he curse and swear?

I wonder what we would have done if we'd been back there. You know, we might have been tempted—the Devil tempts everybody. We might have been tempted to say, “Well, I don't think I'm going to go to church if that's the kind of people that are in that church and leading out. Imagine! Did you hear what happened? Why, one of the leading preachers up there cursed and swore the other night, and I heard somebody that was there tell about it.”

Was it the truth? Did he? Yes. But whose church was it? Was it Christ's church? And if I'd wanted to be in Jesus' church, that's right where I'd have been. Is that right?

And thank God, Peter got converted and he was sorry, and the Lord used him some weeks later to give the Pentecostal sermon. I wonder, friend, if we had been back there and sitting in the pew, do you suppose we would have gotten much good out of Peter's sermon if we'd heard him curse and swear too much before? Some of the folks that were converted that day were the very ones that had heard Peter curse and swear two months before. They saw something had happened to change Peter's life.

Dear ones, I beseech you, never let what some human being does discourage you, either with Jesus or with His church. You know, I say sometimes, a church is like a big washing machine, and I've thought about it as I've seen the clothes in the washing machine. Suppose the pair of overalls that's in there getting washed should look at some other pair of overalls and say, "My, that's a dirty pair of overalls. I think I'm going to get out of here." Suppose it could jump out of the washing machine. Now, it would get separated from those dirty clothes in there, but would it get clean on that program? Why, no, no.

And Jesus is in the business of washing His church. That's what He says in Ephesians 5. And one of the things he uses is that we're to help one another. So, if you see your brother do something that's wrong, and you pray to God about it and God burdens your heart, God may use you to go and talk to that brother.

Now, He doesn't tell you to go tell other people about it. Sure. Go tell him his faults—I read it here—so and tell him his fault where? Between thee and him alone. Now, that's one of the things you want to learn right now at the beginning of your Christian life. If you see somebody in the church make a mistake, don't talk to other people about it. Jesus doesn't like that. He feels bad about that. The church is His church. He doesn't like to have His faults talked about.

But He might use you to help talk to the man that can do something about it. Who's the one that can do something about some mistake? The one that made it. He's the only one that can, isn't he? So, go talk to him. All right. And if he'll hear you, you've gained your brother. All right.

Sixteenth verse. Read it with me:

"But if he will not hear thee, then take with thee one or two more, that in the mouth of two or three witnesses every word may be established" *Ibid.*, verse 16.

Why, yes, see. Suppose, Tom sees me do something that he feels shouldn't be done, and he comes to me with a burdened heart, and he talks to me about it. Suppose, I don't pay any attention to him. Suppose, I say, "Oh, I don't think that's anything," but he's still burdened about it. Is there anything more he can do about it? Why, yes.

He might get hold of Brother McClure or Brother Damon or Eddie or somebody, and bring two or three together. And, you know, really, if all those people talked to me and they all felt burdened about it like Tom did, don't you think that'd impress me? Why, sure, it would, yes. And they'd pray with me, and that's a part of

being in the church is being willing to help others that way, and also be willing to be helped ourselves.

All right. Now, the next verse. Together:

“And if he shall neglect to hear them, tell it unto the church: but if he neglect to hear the church, let him be unto thee as an heathen man and a publican” *Ibid.*, verse 17.

Where are heathen people and publicans? Inside the church or outside? Well, they're outside, yes. The person who doesn't hear the church, by that act, puts himself where? Outside. That's right. That's right. If he neglects to hear the church.

So, are we to hear the church? Yes. Now, that doesn't mean that the church is going to pry into every little detail in our lives. There's many things that are between us and God alone.

For instance, the church doesn't come into our accounting and tell us just how much money to pay to the church. That's a matter between us and God. And God has told us that we should pay the tithe, but the church doesn't come and audit our books to see whether we paid the right tithe or not. That's between us and God, because God's the only one that really knows how much we have and what our tithe should be, isn't He?

And so, I might go on with many a thing that the church doesn't try to control, but there's some things the church can talk to us about, some things the church *ought* to talk to us about.

If Peter hadn't gotten some help right away that night, by the Lord looking at him, don't you think the church should have talked to him about his cursing and swearing? Why, sure. If a man's stealing, shouldn't the church talk to him about it? If a man gets drunk and disgraces the name of Jesus and the church, don't you think the church ought to talk to him about it? You can see that there are some things that would bring disgrace upon the name of Christ and the church.

Now, my point is, Jesus has put in this world a body of men and women that He calls the church, and to that church He's given responsibility and authority, and we're to listen. We're to listen—listen to Jesus and listen to the church.

Well, you know, a person might say, “Well, how in the world can I listen in both directions?” Well, I want to ask you a question. How many of you—you don't need to raise your hands because, of course, the answer's obvious, but how many of you had a father and a mother, both? Did you listen to both? Why, sure, you listened to both.

Now, if down here in this world, with poor human beings, we can learn to listen to father and mother both, and they make a lot of mistakes, probably, sometimes, don't you suppose that we can learn to listen to Jesus, our Heavenly Father, and to His church?

And just as a child is blessed that has a God-fearing father and a God-fearing mother, so you and I, as children born into the Kingdom of God, we're greatly blessed in having a Father and a mother. Jesus is our Father, and the church is our mother.

And under the leadership of God, through His Son, Jesus, and the church, which is His body, we can grow up as children in the family of God. I think it's a wonderful thing. I think it's a wonderful thing, and I thank God for it. I thank God for it with all my soul.

Well, now, I want you to commit a text or two to memory. I want you to know what 1 Corinthians 12:13 says. If you don't learn every word by heart, learn this much:

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...”
1 Corinthians 12:13.

That's the first line of your text. 1 Corinthians 12:13. And I want you to learn that.

Then, I want you to learn Colossians 1:18, the first line:

“And He is the head of the body, the church” Colossians
1:18.

And then, I want you to learn Revelation 12:17, which tells us which church is God's true church. Revelation 12:17.

1 Corinthians 12:13, first part:

“For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body...”
1 Corinthians 12:13.

Colossians 1:18:

“And He is the head of the body, the church” Colossians
1:18.

And Revelation 12:17, that tells us what the true church is, and how we can find it in this world.

Now, we want to have prayer that God will bless each one of you in a special way. We're coming up now to the time of baptism, and I have some very important things to study with you next Sunday night. I hope every one of you can be here without anyone missing, for this is very important, what we'll have next Sunday night, and I hope you will all have these texts in mind when you come.

I want each one of you during this week, as you spend time alone with God, to ask the Lord very definitely—say, “Dear Lord, if there's anything that I need to

understand before I'm baptized, bring it to my mind. If there's anything that I need to do before I'm baptized, bring it to my mind."

You know, dear friends, we've read tonight that if we repent and are baptized, we'll receive what? The gift of the Holy Spirit. That's right. But I want to tell you something. Just being baptized won't do it for us. Won't do it.

This book of Acts that we were reading about that tells this wonderful story about the apostle Paul and how he received the vision from heaven and the church taught him what to do and he was baptized and received the Spirit of God, this same book, in the chapter preceding, the eighth chapter of Acts, tells us about a man named Simon.

I just want to tell you the story briefly. You can read about it in the Bible, but he was a man who had been a great sorcerer, a magician, up in the city of Samaria, and Phillip went from Jerusalem to Samaria and held meetings there in Samaria, and hundreds of people were converted and they were baptized, and then, Peter and John went down there and prayed for them that they might receive the Spirit.

But, as you read here in Acts, the eighth chapter, Simon saw that. He'd been baptized. Apparently, he had accepted the Gospel. But when he saw Peter do that, he said, Oh, Peter, here's some money I want to give you and I want you to give me this power so that whoever I lay hands on, they'll receive the Spirit of God. Offered him money for it.

Did he understand? No. Well, he'd been baptized. He slipped in. But do you know what Peter said?

"But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee" Acts 8:20-21.

Had he been baptized? But had he repented? Why, no, because Peter told him he had that yet to do. Did he receive the Spirit? Why, no, he didn't receive it.

So my point is, even though a person is baptized and becomes a member of the church, that in itself doesn't give him the gift of the Spirit. If he's not truly repentant, truly converted, all the baptism in the world won't give him the gift of the Spirit.

Baptism is the outward service, but God Himself is the One who gives the gift of the Spirit. We can teach you and we can baptize you, but we can't give you the Spirit. Only God can do that.

And so, my point is, as you study these verses from day to day, ask God to make the work in your heart go deep, and ask God to prepare you to receive the

Holy Spirit. Ask God, if there is anything in your heart that needs changing, that He'll bring it to your mind and help you to be willing to give it up.

But you're dealing with God. There are things I can talk to you about but God will talk to your heart about a lot of things that I won't talk to you about. He will. As a dear old friend of mine used to say, "If you'll just play fair with God." Just play fair with God. Open up your heart to Him and be willing that God will deal with you.

And don't be afraid to do that. God loves you. He loves you a million, million, million times more than anybody in this world ever could. He died for you. You're His. He made you, and He bought you with His blood.

So don't be afraid to go to Him and open up your heart to Him and say, "Lord, I'm coming to you. I want to be baptized, but before I'm baptized I want to know that all my sins are under the blood, and I want to know that everything is right between you and me. I want to be able to go down into the water without any shadow over my heart."

Can a man that has sinned, can a woman that's sinned, can a boy or girl that's sinned, *can* they know that? Oh, yes. Very simple. We've tried to make it simple. If we'll confess our sins, what will Jesus do? Forgive them and cleanse us from what? All unrighteousness. We're to repent, confess our sins, and believe that He does it.

Now, we're going to have prayer, and after we've had prayer, I'd like to have those of you that—let's see, we have quite a number of people here tonight, and I want to have just a few minutes with those that are planning definitely with Jesus' help to go ahead at this time and be baptized. I want to have just a few minutes with you alone here after the closing prayer.

All right. Let's kneel together. ...and all who would like to pray...

[Several people offer a short prayer.]

Father in Heaven, we're so glad that you know our heart. The hearts of those who have prayed out loud to Thee and those who were praying silently to Thee, each one just now, hear their prayer, we pray. Oh Father in Heaven, we're so glad that the One who can read our hearts, is the One who loves us with an everlasting love. Help us to come running to Thee, like a child with a father and mother who loves them, help us to draw ourselves in Thy dear arms and know that You accept us because You made us, because You died for us, and because You are pleading for us tonight. We come to you with our faults, just as we are, and we *know* that you accept us because we come in Thy blessed name. Amen.

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W.D. Frazee Sermons
PO Box 129, Wildwood, GA 30757
1-800-WDF-1840 / 706-820-9755
www.WDFsermons.org
support@WDFsermons.org