



FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH

By Tonny Mubiru

***“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal”
judgment. Heb 6:1-2***

THE FOUNDATIONS OF OUR FAITH

By Tony Mubiru.

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I am married to Sandra Mubiru and we have three biological children and many spiritual children. I was called into the ministry as a pastor, working under the fathering of Apostle Wilson and Joy Kitondekigya of Anointed Christian healing ministries – Zana, Entebbe road, Kampala Uganda.

Our local church is located at Nakirebe, Kaggaba, Mpigi district in Uganda. This is also our base, from where we do the work of making disciples and raising sons for Jesus. I got saved in 2003 and joined the apostolic ministry in 2009. I started my journey of discipleship under the leadership of Apostle Wilson and Joy Kitondekigya who are my spiritual parents. After 9 years of discipleship, I was commissioned into ministry in Nakirebe.

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All scriptures used in this book are from New King James Version.

All Interpretation of words are from Strong's Greek Concordance

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INTRODUCTION:

This manual has been developed from the different teaching sessions on the above subject – The foundations of our faith. It will be helpful to all new believers in Jesus and all those that have been saved for a long time but have never had a chance to be disciplined Apostolically, that is; those that have never received the pure milk of the word.

1 Peter 2:2. "as newborn babes, desire the pure milk of the word, that you may grow thereby..."

The writer of the book of Hebrews challenges the Hebrew brethren who had stayed in the church for a long time but seemed not to grow **"For though by this time you ought to be teachers, you need someone to teach you the first principles of the oracles of God, and you have come to need milk and not solid food..."** Hebrews 5:12.

In chapter **Heb 6:1-2**, **"...the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment."** He mentions the elementary principles which are necessary for all believers to be able to start on the journey of maturity. Note that in **v.3**, **"And this we will do if God permits."** he emphasizes that no permit to go on to maturity will be given if these foundations are not properly laid. So, I believe that this manual is going to help you achieve this goal.

Always, the strength of a building is seen in the foundation that was laid. Apostle Peter in his letter **1 Peter 2:5** **"You also as living stones are being built up a spiritual house a holy priesthood to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Christ Jesus."** Meaning that we are a moving spiritual house of God of the New Testament covenant. In the Old Testament, the house of God could not move! It was stationed in one place, built with stone and mortar. In the New Testament, however, it is built with living stones: you and I and so, it can move from one place to another because it is a living house.

Since we are the house of God, there is no house without a foundation. So having understood the truth of us being that house - a dwelling place of God on the earth; we are to lay the foundation which will become the strength of the house.

The strength of the foundation determines the height of the house. If the foundation of the house is weak, one cannot build a strong house on it because it will fall.

As new born again people, we need to be laid very well on this foundation, even Jesus Christ. Shockingly, many believers were not taught the foundations of our faith! Most Christians were taught prayer and fasting in their earliest days as newborn babes. The foundation being thus weak, many start with and capitalise on praying, becoming a house which is shaking, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine.

Jesus is bringing us back to the foundation of the scriptures.

Let us start with **Matthew 7:24-27**. Three things are talked about:

A wise man built his house on the rock. Remember every builder lays his foundation on the subsoil, that is, the rock and not on black soil. The rock is Jesus according to **1Corinthians 3:11** meaning that his faith is in Jesus Christ, who is in support of his house. Three things happened to the house:

Rain: which can mean a blessing of material things.

If anyone's faith is laid in Jesus Christ, even when they get riches, they cannot be tossed by the wind of things. They will remain firm in heart, knowing that Jesus is all in all and the reverse is true. A good example to learn from in the scriptures is Job.

Wind: which represents strange doctrines.

Paul warns us in **Ephesians 4:14** "**... that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine...**"

When a believer is not laid on the rock of Christ, they are easily taken by this wind of doctrine, and the reverse is true.

Floods: which represents problems that we face

When one's faith is established in Jesus, even when they face challenges, stresses, pressures and problems of life, they cannot be moved. Job's faith remained steadfast on God and the apostle Paul also testifies that, "**Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?...For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities nor powers, nor things present nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.**" Rom 8:35-39

All believers are to go beyond being only saved but come to the full knowledge of the truth of the word. In **1 Timothy 2:3-4** "**For this is good and acceptable in the sight of God our Savior, who desires all men to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth.**"

We are blessed because God is restoring to us the fivefold ministry gifts, "**And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,**" Eph 4:11 to properly lay the church on the foundation; so that it is firmly established in Jesus.

As aforementioned, **Heb 6:1-2** gives us the elementary principles of Christ that need to be established in the life of every believer. This is the pure milk of the word in **1 Pet 2:2, Heb 5:12**. I will later break each more exhaustively, but in summary, the six are mentioned below and I kindly ask you to memorise them in their order.

1. Repentance from dead works
2. Faith towards God
3. Doctrine of Baptisms
4. Laying on of hands
5. Resurrection of the dead
6. Eternal judgment.

REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

The word repentance is **metánoia** – literally, "a change of mind" (**Stongs's Greek #3341**)

It is changing the way I have been thinking. For example, after getting an understanding that what I have been doing was wrong, repentance would then mean that I turn from my wrongdoing to do what is right.

Dead works are all ungodly acts/ works. Everything that one does but is outside of God is a dead work. For example, theft, jealousy etc. Dead works can either be worldly habits or dead religious works. To elaborate more on dead religious work; there are things that God had commanded to be done in the Old Testament and later in the New Testament, they were fulfilled by Jesus Christ. As the New Testament church, if we go back again to do those works as they were done in the Old Testament without knowing or seeing how they have been fulfilled - in other words if we do them - but not in their fulfilment, then we get caught up in dead religious works. **Isiah 1:10-15.**

John 14:6 "Jesus said to him, "I am the way, the truth, and the life..."

This means that anything done outside of Jesus is lifeless!

Repentance is the way to enter the kingdom of God

"That if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Rom 10:9-10

Repentance is a heart attitude! For one to receive salvation, or to be born again, they need to believe the word they have heard in their hearts and confess what they have believed with their mouth. Repentance leading to salvation is not a confession of sins but a confession of Jesus - the one whom I have believed.

Also read:

Acts 2:37-38

Acts 8:34-37

What does one need to repent?

"For whoever calls on the name of the Lord shall be saved." How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?" Rom 10:13-14

To come to repentance, one needs to hear the word of God. It is the word that can touch the heart and mind of a person and cause them to come to repentance. The word judges all disobedience in the heart of a man and causes him to turn to God.

For example in **Acts 2:37-38**, after the people heard the word that Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, ***"...they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"***

In **v.38** Peter gave them the solution, ***"Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."***

It is also the word of God that brings Godly sorrow, which is a main ingredient in repentance. Godly sorrow is to feel sorry that your actions have offended God and thus bring you to a change of mind. Paul's epistle to the Corinthians had made them sorry, but Paul says, ***"Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner, that you might suffer loss from us in nothing. For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."*** 2 Cor 7:9-10

How do we walk in true repentance?

"but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance." Acts 26:20

Walking in true repentance, therefore, is doing the works befitting repentance -it is walking in a changed life! It is bearing fruits of repentance. True repentance would then mean a liar now speaks the truth and he who stole stealing no longer.

John the baptist also advises the Pharisees and Sadducees who had come for baptism to, ***"...bear fruits worthy of repentance"*** Matt 3:8

Even believers need repentance

Every believer is to live a changing / repentant life. We are to continue with the daily change of mind. This is the sure way we can remain and continue in relationship with our Lord Jesus Christ.

"And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, that you may prove what is that good and acceptable and perfect will of God." Rom 12:2

Examples of dead religious works:

In the context of **Heb 6:1-2**, dead works refer to dead religious works that the church needed to repentance from, which were hindering their spiritual growth. These religious works are still practised in the contemporary church and have equally hindered our spiritual growth, we are to repent of all these, and go on to maturity. Here are a few examples:

Church leaders/choirs wearing special clothes

In the Old Testament, God had commanded that priests ought to wear robes of fine linen. The high priest was even more decorated with an ephod, breastplate, turban etc. **Exo 28**. These were for righteousness and glory.

In the New Testament, we receive righteousness through faith.

"But now the righteousness of God apart from the law is revealed, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, even the righteousness of God, through faith in Jesus Christ, to all and on all who believe." Rom 3:21-22

Today, we don't need to be arrayed in special clothes to minister to God since we have been dressed in a spiritual attire which is Christ!

"For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ." Galatians 3:27

While we worship, God is not after the attires we wear, but His heart is after him who worships in spirit and truth, **John 4:23**.

Calling buildings churches and the pulpit the holiest place

In the Old Testament, the tabernacle of meeting was divided into three; the outer court, the holy place and the holiest place/ holy of holies, **Heb 9:1-5**. This same model is still used by some religious churches today; dividing the church building into the outer court, the holy place (where the congregation seats) and the the pulpit they call the holiest place. They make this become very sacred that only a few selected people may step on it. In the New Testament, we are the house of God, **Heb 3:9** and the Most Holy one lives in us. ***"Do you not know that you are the temple of God and that the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which temple you are."*** 1 Cor 3:16-17

Rigid church programs

Many churches put a lot of emphasis on planning and keeping rigid programs that can never be adjusted even when God desires to take charge. **Isaiah 1:10-13**. These are then run on the experience of the ministers rather than being spirit-led, **Rom 8:14**. All these hinder God's working in our midst.

The New Testament church should be full of life; ***"How is it then, brethren? Whenever you come together, each of you has a psalm, has a teaching, has a tongue, has a revelation, has an interpretation. Let all things be done for edification."*** 1 Cor 14:26

We are all accepted to minister to God because we are all priests to God.

1 Peter 2:9. Remember only those who were priests from the tribe of Levi were allowed to minister to God in the Old Testament.

Having a rigid prayer time

Popular in the contemporary church today is the 3:00 am prayer. A scripture in **Acts 3:1** ***"Now Peter and John went up together to the temple at the hour of prayer, the ninth hour."*** is often misquoted. Some believers then take on a tradition of waking up every 3:00 am to pray with an attitude that this is the God-appointed time of prayer when all prayer requests are answered.

What they miss to know is that: Peter and John were going to the temple at 3:00 pm during the day and that the Israelites had a religious practice of going to the temple

for prayer twice a day to offer the two daily sacrifices; in the morning and at twilight,
Exo 29:39.

In the New Testament, we are free to pray/ communicate with our Father as often as we want to, regardless of where we are.

FAITH TOWARDS GOD

Heb 11:6 tells us that without faith, it is impossible to please God! This makes faith one of the most important things in the life of any believer.

Faith is **pístis (Strong's Greek #4102)** which means to persuade or to be fully persuaded. Faith is coming into fully trusting and believing God. It is a persuasion based on hearing. **"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom 10:17.**

In **Heb 11:1**, faith is described as, **"...the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen."** God is spirit, **John 4:24** and for us to be able to access and understand the things of the spirit, we must have and exercise faith (believing and trusting)

"...for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." v. 6

When do we come to God?

In **Genesis 3** we see the fall of man which separated him from God. Jesus came to be the way back to the Father, **John 14:6**. By believing - coming to faith in Jesus, we are reconciled back to the Father. Faith is therefore key to bringing us back to God. This is well connected with the first foundational principle of repentance from dead works. When we change our minds, we become fully persuaded (have faith) to turn to God and live a godly life.

What do we hope for? Heb 11:1

In discipleship, we hope for perfection in God's image. We hope that we shall be like Jesus and we have faith that God will accomplish it. So, our faith is in nothing or no one else, but God. We also hope for the coming of Jesus Christ, and that he shall transform our lowly bodies (resurrection of the dead) **Phil 3:21**. These promises we hold fast and are a basis of our faith.

Two types of faith

a) Gift of faith

In **1 Corinthians 12:8-10** nine gifts of the spirit are mentioned. These are the gifts a believer can receive when they are filled with the holy spirit. Faith is mentioned, **"to another faith by the same Spirit," v.9**. This gift of faith is different from faith toward God which is explained above. The gift is exercised when one believes God to perform something which they have stood in faith to pray/ ask for.

Elijah stood in the same faith to command rain not to fall on the earth for three years and it is the same faith he uses to ask God for rain. **1 Kings 17 and 18**.

It is the same gift of faith Paul talks about, **"...and though I have all faith so that I could remove mountains..." 1 Cor 13:2**

b) The fruit of faith

Faith toward God is on the other hand the fruit. It is this that enables one to bear the fruit of faithfulness in **Gal 5:22**. No wonder **1 Cor 13:2** notes that although one may have the gift of faith, without the fruit, the gift profits nothing (fruit of love)

In **Acts 6:8-10** Stephen, one of the seven deacons had the gift of faith which made him brave to testify about Jesus amidst opposition. On top of the gift, he also had the fruit of faith, that even when he was being stoned to death because of his preaching, he remained firm to the end. He was fully persuaded concerning Jesus and the word that he (Steven) preached.

"By faith Moses, when he became of age, refused to be called the son of Pharaoh's daughter, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the passing pleasures of sin, esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures in Egypt; for he looked to the reward," Heb 11:24-26

Moses' faith exhibited here is the faith of believing and trusting God as He is.

Abraham also walked in the same faith, ***"...when he was tested, offered up Isaac, and he who had received the promises offered up his only begotten son, of whom it was said, "In Isaac your seed shall be called," concluding that God was able to raise him up, even from the dead, from which he also received him in a figurative sense." Heb 11:17-19***

Abraham had the fruit of faith that gave him a confirmation that even if he offered his only son, God could be able to rise him from the dead.

When we have the fruit of faith, we understand and believe God for who he is, not what he has done. This faith brings us into an intimate friendship with God, **Gen.18:17**.

How do we obtain faith toward God?

"So then faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Rom 10:17

It is the word that we have heard and believed that produces faith in us so that we believe God in our hearts.

"And many more believed because of His own word." John 4:41

"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise," Eph 1:13

Faith in Action

In **James 2:21-24** ***"Was not Abraham our father justified by works when he offered Isaac his son on the altar? Do you see that faith was working together with his works, and by works faith was made perfect? And the Scripture was fulfilled which says, "Abraham believed God, and it was accounted to him for righteousness." And***

he was called the friend of God. You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith only."

According to scripture, one receives righteousness and salvation through faith in Jesus Christ, **(Eph 2:8-9)** but as we continue in this journey of faith, we don't just talk about it, but we practice our faith/ what we believe. James puts it this way, "But someone will say, "You have faith, and I have works." Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works."

In other words, James is saying that if I say that I believe God, then I must show actions/ works that show that I indeed believe in God. These are works that show I am living a different life, the life of God which shows the faith I now hold in Jesus Christ. The reverse is true. If I say that I am a believer but live a life that is contrary to the life I was called to live, then I am a hypocrite because I have no works that demonstrate my faith. So, we are to put our faith into action!

What do we receive through faith?

The Holy Spirit

"...that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith." Gal 3:14

We become sons of God

"For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus." Gal 3:26

We are saved

"For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God," Eph 2:8

Access

"in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him." Eph 3:12

THE DOCTRINE OF BAPTISMS

The word baptism is **baptizō** in Greek (**Strong's Greek #907**) which means to submerge, immerse or literally to dip under (a liquid especially, water). This, therefore, means that true baptism is submerging a person underwater, and not the act of sprinkling water on the forehead.

Baptism in the Old Testament

The children of Israel experienced baptism during their journey to the promised land after leaving Egypt - in the Red Sea.

"...all were baptised into Moses in the cloud and in the sea..."

1 Corinthians 10:2. These were baptised into Moses since they were led by Moses, who also handed down the laws of God to them.

Remember, Egypt represents the world system. Like Israel, we experience baptism after repentance from our sins and having our faith toward God- that is, after leaving Egypt/ the world.

In the New Testament, we are baptised into Jesus Christ (**Gal 3:27**) - that is, the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

In **Exodus 25:8** God commanded Moses to build Him a holy place (the Tabernacle) that He may dwell among His people. Among the articles in the Tabernacle was the altar of the burnt offering on which animal sacrifices were offered. This represents the cross where Jesus died. Immediately after it, was the bronze basin (larva) that contained water for washing. When the priest had completed offering his sacrifice, he would come to the basin and wash; put off his former clothes and put on a clean linen garment.

The bronze basin for washing represents baptism, where after accepting Jesus' sacrifice on the cross (repentance + faith) one is baptised. During baptism, we put off the old man and put on the new man. "For as many of you as were baptised into Christ have put on Christ." **Gal 3:27**

According to the Old Testament, no priest could be allowed to go into the holy place and the holiest place without washing in the basin.

The doctrine of baptism can be categorized into three:

John's baptism - the baptism of repentance

Jesus' baptism - to fulfil all righteousness

Believer's baptism - baptism into Jesus.

John's Baptism

According to **Acts 19**, the Bible explains that John the Baptist's baptism was that of repentance.

"Then Paul said, "John indeed baptised with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus." Acts 19:4

"John came baptising in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went

out to him and were all baptised by him in the Jordan River, confessing their sins."
Mark 1:4-5.

Coming for John's baptism would then mean one has repented/ changed their mind and believed in the one who was to come - Jesus.

Baptism was not new in Jewish practice. It was a requirement for only Gentiles who would wish to practice the Jewish culture and religion. To the Jews therefore, this kind of baptism that John introduced was unusual - which required even the Jews to be baptised.

So, if John was baptising the baptism of repentance, what was Jesus repenting about since he was also baptised by John?

Jesus' Baptism

According to the scriptures, Jesus was perfect and had no sin, thus, nothing to repent about. However, Jesus' baptism was to fulfil all righteousness.

"Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptised by him. And John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I need to be baptised by You, and are You coming to me?" But Jesus answered and said to him, "Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfil all righteousness." Then he allowed Him." Matt 3:13-15

What kind of righteousness was Jesus fulfilling in His baptism?

The main purpose why Jesus came into the world was to be a king and a mediator between God and man (High priest). According to God's order in the Old Testament, kings would come from the tribe of Judah, (**Gen 49:10**) while priests would come from the tribe of Levi. (**Num 3:12, Deut 18:1-5**)

Jesus was of the tribe of Judah (**Matt 1:1-16**) while John was of the tribe of Levi, his father being a high priest (**Luke 1:5**)

To get the impartation of the priestly anointing, Jesus had to humble Himself to John the Baptist to be baptised. So while Jesus was being baptised, there was a spiritual transfer taking place!

He was fulfilling all righteousness to be a worthy High priest to reconcile us back to the Father.

"When He had been baptised, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him."

According to the Old Testament, while the priests were being consecrated for this ministry, they were washed with water, and anointed with oil for the service. (**Exo 29:4-7**). This was fulfilled during Jesus' baptism, in the sight of all the Jews that had gathered. He was filled with the Holy Spirit without measure - fully consecrated for the priesthood according to the order of Melchizedek (King and Priest)

Believer's baptism - The command to baptise

In **Matthew 28:19** we have a command to baptise from Jesus! ***"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."***

Baptising those who believe is part of the Great Commission in **Mtt 28**.

Mark 16:16 emphasises that ***"He who believes and is baptised will be saved..."***

Today, many people in the church do not pay due attention to baptism. Believers go months and years without being baptised while church leaders and evangelists pay little attention to baptising those that have believed.

However, the early church shows us the very pattern we must follow. They immediately baptised all that believed.

Acts 2:41 - the 3000 believers on the day of Pentecost were baptised.

Acts 16:33 - The Philippian jailer and his family immediately baptised.

Acts 8:12 - Believers in Samaria baptised

Acts 8: 38 - The Ethiopian Eunuch baptised

Acts 19:5 - The Ephesians baptised

Acts 22:16 - Paul baptised

We are baptised in the name of Jesus

As believers, we are baptised into the name. **Matt 28:19** ***"...baptising them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit..."***

While baptising those who believed, the disciples baptised in the name of Jesus. Why is this?

This was because they had got the revelation of who Jesus is and the name of Jesus. From the Old Testament, baptism was to enter into a name ie. Onoma (**Strong's Greek #3686**) which means the "character"

According to **1 Cor 10:2**, ***"all (Israel) were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,"***

In the New Testament, we are baptised to enter into the Lord Jesus. We are baptised into the character of Jesus Christ. Jesus is the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit!
John 10:30, 14:9, 17:22

Significance of baptism

Rom 6:3-14

The believer joins Christ in His death **v.3**

Buried with Christ in baptism **v.4, 6** (death of the old man)

Raised with Christ in a new life **v. 4**

(Raised as a new creature, **2Corinthians 5:17**, made alive together with Christ **Eph 2:5**)

No longer slaves to sin **V.6**

Free from sin **v.7**

Alive with Christ **v.8**

Death no longer has dominion over us **v.9, 11**

Our members are now instruments of righteousness **v.13**

No longer under the law, but in grace **v.14**

Through baptism, we are clothed with/ put on Christ, **Gal 3:27**

After baptism, we are able to receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Apart from the believers in Cornelius' house who received the Holy Spirit before being baptised while Peter was still preaching, **Acts 10:44** and the apostles who received the Holy spirit while in the upper room, **Acts 2:1-4**; many believers in the early church received the Holy Spirit after baptism through the laying on of hands.

But even when the Holy Spirit has been given before baptism, believers still need to be baptised. **Acts 10:47-48**.

Who is responsible to baptise?

Once the gospel has been preached to a person and he/she believes;

a) A disciple can baptise the believer - **Acts 9:10, 18**

b) Any minister in the fivefold ministry or elders can baptise. In the examples given above; apostles, Philip the evangelist and elders baptised the believers.

The blood of Jesus makes baptism real

A person can only be baptised after accepting Jesus as their saviour. (believing in the sacrifice that Jesus did.) We do not get righteousness through baptism but by faith in Jesus. **Rom 3:22**. Thus, baptism is simply the first step of obedience to God after believing.

"There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God)..." 1 Pet 3:21

LAYING ON OF HANDS

Laying on of hands is a common practice in the contemporary church. If you are a born-again Christian, chances are there is a man or woman of God who has ever laid their hands upon you, for one reason or another. But while it is a common practice, we need to examine the scriptures carefully to learn when and why the laying on of hands is done.

Laying on of hands is among the church practices that have been paganised in the church today, with men and women of God laying their hands on people for all sorts of reasons and things. However, what does the Bible say about the laying of hands?

In the Old Testament, laying on of hands was done to:

Impart a blessing - **Genesis 48:13-16** Jacob prayed a blessing to his grandchildren, Joseph's sons.

Separate/ commission into ministry/ impart authority - **Num 27:15-23** Joshua ordained as the new leader of the children of Israel.

Num 8:9-11 - the Levites ordained to serve in the work of the Lord.

In the New Testament, after a person has repented from dead works, put their faith in God and have also been baptised, the next step is to have the laying on of hands to receive the Holy Spirit.

Many times in His ministry, Jesus used the laying on of hands to:

Heal the sick (**Mat 9:18, Luke 13:13, 4:40, Mark 6:5**)

Bless the little children (**Mat 19:13, 15**)

The New Testament church used the laying on of hands to:

Receive the Holy Spirit - **Acts 8:14-17, Acts 9:17, Acts 19:5-6**

Heal the sick - **Mark 16:18, Acts 28:8-9**

Release gifts - **2Tim 1:6, 1Tim 4:14**

Ordain/ Set apart/ Commission for ministry - **Acts 6:5-6, Acts 13:1-3**

Who can minister the laying on of hands?

For healing: all believers/ disciples can minister in the laying on of hands.

Mark 16:17-18, Acts 9:10,17 Acts 28:8

For setting apart: elders and ministers in the five-fold ministry.

1Tim 4:14, Acts 13:1

For the filling of the Holy Spirit: **Acts 8:14,17, Acts 9:10,17, Acts 19:6**

RESSURECTION OF THE DEAD

The word resurrection is **anastasis (Strong's Greek #386)** which means: a standing up, a raising up. All believers need to know that the resurrection of the dead is the hope of the church. This starts with the resurrection of Jesus!

The resurrection of the dead can be looked at in three parts:

- Jesus' resurrection
- Spiritual resurrection of believers
- Resurrection of all in the grave

Jesus' resurrection

The Apostle Paul says, **"And if Christ is not risen, then our preaching is empty and your faith is also empty." 1 Cor 15:14.** This means that the resurrection of Jesus is the backbone of our salvation. And because Christ was raised from the dead, we also have a hope that we shall be raised together with Him.

***"For if the dead do not rise, then Christ is not risen. And if Christ is not risen, your faith is futile; you are still in your sins! Then also those who have fallen asleep in Christ have perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men the most pitiable. But now Christ is risen from the dead, and has become the firstfruits of those who have fallen asleep."* 1Cor 15:16-20**

We have more than enough scriptural evidence that Jesus was raised from the dead. During His ministry, Jesus made it clear to His disciples that He would die, be buried and in three days, be raised from the dead. **Mark 9:31, Acts 2:31, Luke 24:7, 46 Mat 16:21, 17:22-23**

Through his death, burial and resurrection, Jesus was doing the work of a high priest, mediating between man and God. Whereas the high priest in the Old Testament would enter the Tabernacle of Moses with the blood of animals, Jesus entered the heavenly Tabernacle not made with hands, to offer His own pure blood that now makes us whole and reconciles us back to the Father when we believe the Lord Jesus. ***"But Christ came as High Priest of the good things to come, with the greater and more perfect tabernacle not made with hands, that is, not of this creation. Not with the blood of goats and calves, but with His own blood He entered the Most Holy Place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption."* Heb 9:11-12**

Jesus was raised!

Mat 28:5-7

Acts 2:24

Acts 1:3

John 2:19, 21-22

John 20:19-20

1 Cor 15:3-8

Luke 24:22-24, 30-31

Because Jesus was raised from the dead, we have hope for eternal life, knowing that although our mortal bodies will die, we have eternal life through Jesus. **John3:16**

"For since by man came death, by Man also came the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ all shall be made alive." 1 Cor 15:21-22

The spiritual resurrection of believers

Since we have the promise to be made alive in Christ Jesus, when do we live in Christ? The day we accept and obey the Lord Jesus Christ is the day we receive our born-again experience (**John 1:12-13**) and so we become alive in Christ - in the spirit. We are now born of God and our relationship with God which had been taken away by sin is brought back. This is the spiritual resurrection of all who believe in Jesus.

"And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience...But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus," Eph 2:1-6

This spiritual resurrection of believers is also seen in baptism.

Study Rom 6:1-14

Just as our spirits were raised, we are also waiting for the resurrection of our bodies.

"But each one in his own order: Christ the firstfruits, afterward those who are Christ's at His coming. Then comes the end...The last enemy that will be destroyed is death." 1 Cor 15:23-26

The resurrection of all in the grave

For a long time, many people have believed that only the righteous shall be raised from the dead. However, according to scripture, this is not true. The Bible is clear that there will be a resurrection for both the righteous/ good and the unrighteous/bad.

"Do not marvel at this; for the hour is coming in which all who are in the graves will hear His voice and come forth—those who have done good, to the resurrection of life, and those who have done evil, to the resurrection of condemnation." John 5:28-29

"I have hope in God, which they themselves also accept, that there will be a resurrection of the dead, both of the just and the unjust." Acts 24:15

Those who have done good are all those who believed in Jesus. **John 3:16** tells us that he who believes in Jesus shall not perish but have eternal life. Those who did evil are all those who did not receive Jesus. **John 3:18** says that he who does not believe is condemned already.

"He who has the Son has life; he who does not have the Son of God does not have life." 1John 5:12

We received this life when we believe and are still in the flesh. Although our lowly bodies die, we will resurrect and that life will be fulfilled in us!

Sometime back I went to a Catholic burial and the leader told the people to offer a lot of money so that they may pray many masses for the spirit of the dead to move from purgatory to heaven! This is a lie!

You either believe in the Lord Jesus while still on earth and get His reward, or you don't and be destined for eternal condemnation. No amount of prayer can change that.

"...*'Blessed are the dead who die in the Lord from now on.'* "Yes," says the Spirit, *"that they may rest from their labors, and their works follow them."* Rev 14:13

1Corinthians 15 teaches us about the kind of body we shall have in the resurrection
***"But someone will say, "How are the dead raised up? And with what body do they come?"... So also is the resurrection of the dead. The body is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption. It is sown in dishonor, it is raised in glory. It is sown in weakness, it is raised in power. It is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body..."* 1Cor 15:35-44**

Just like God causes a seed that has been planted to germinate, so will He raise us with His resurrection power! Jesus said, ***"I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live."* John 11:25**

Who raises the dead and when will this be?

Read **John 6**

v.39 *"This is the will of the Father who sent Me, that of all He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day."*

v.40 *"And this is the will of Him who sent Me, that everyone who sees the Son and believes in Him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

v.44 *"No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him; and I will raise him up at the last day."*

v. 54 *"Whoever eats My flesh and drinks My blood has eternal life, and I will raise him up at the last day."*

ETERNAL JUDGEMENT

Judgement is derived from the Greek word, **krísis (Strong's Greek #2920)** which means: to separate, distinguish, and judge.

The word gives us an insight into what will happen at the end of the age when God will make a clear distinction and separation between good and bad, righteous and evil.

In the eternal judgement, there will be those who will be condemned and those who will not be condemned. The scriptures clearly show those who will fall on either side.

Who is condemned?

John 3:16-21

v17 *"For God did not send His Son into the world to condemn the world, but that the world through Him might be saved."*

Jesus did not come to condemn the world, but His desire was for Himself to come so that we may have faith in Him and escape condemnation. So, if someone dies today, not believing in Jesus, they are condemned, not because of their sins but because they didn't accept Jesus.

Jesus opened the door for all to move out of condemnation which we had all entered into through the fall of man. Failure to believe in Jesus will result in eternal condemnation and death

"Then He will also say to those on the left hand, 'Depart from Me, you cursed, into the everlasting fire prepared for the devil and his angels'" Matt 25:41

"And anyone not found written in the Book of Life was cast into the lake of fire."

Rev 20:15

Also **John 3:36**

Who will not be condemned?

"He who believes in Him is not condemned; but he who does not believe is condemned already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." John 3:18

It is important that as the church, we do not postpone judgement to a future time but know that the judgement is now!

When you believe Jesus now, you escape condemnation now, and the reverse is true.

"And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life."

Jude 1:14-15

Also **John 5:24, John 3:36**

"There is therefore now no condemnation to those who are in Christ Jesus, who do not walk according to the flesh, but according to the Spirit." Rom 8:1

Also **v5**

Please note that the scriptures are specific that there is no condemnation to those who are not only in Christ Jesus but also walk according to the spirit. This means that even after receiving Jesus, we need to walk according to the spirit and so, our lifestyle needs to reflect Jesus. Although after receiving Jesus were escape

condemnation, we, however, start moving on a journey of being sanctified, conformed and changed into the character of Jesus.

Remember, judgement is now! Every day as we walk according to the spirit, God judges the sin so we are continuously purified and separated from sin. **2 Cor 10:5-6**

"Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad." **2Cor 5:9-10**

This scripture speaks of judgement! We are no longer condemned, but we shall be judged. All who believe shall stand before the judgement seat of God to give an account for the things done in the flesh.

"Then I saw a great white throne and Him who sat on it, from whose face the earth and the heaven fled away... And there was found no place for them. And I saw the dead, small and great, standing before God, and books were opened. And another book was opened, which is the Book of Life. And the dead were judged according to their works, by the things which were written in the books... And they were judged, each one according to his works." **Rev 20:11-13**

How does God judge?

- According to the light that we have - **Rom 2:12, Matt 12:41-42, Rom 1:20**
- According to the truth of the word - **Rom 2:1-2, John 12-47-48**
- Without partiality - **1Pet 1:17, Rom 2:11**
- According to our works - **Rev 20:12-13, 1Pet 1:17**
- According to our obedience to the gospel - **2Thes 1:8**

What rewards shall we receive at the eternal judgement?

- Eternal life - **Matt 25:46, John 3:16, 1Tim 4:8**
- The crown of righteousness - **2Tim 4:8**

What is heaven like?

- God (our Father) is in heaven - **Matt 6:9, Psalm 14:2**
- It is the throne of God - **Isiah 66:1**
- Heaven rules earth - **Matt 6:10, Dan 4:26**
- Righteousness, peace and joy - **Rom 14:17**
- There is no death, sorrow, crying or pain - **Rev 21:3-4**

What is hell like?

- Eternal punishment - **Matt 25:46**
- Eternal destruction from the presence of God - **Rev 11:18, 2Thes 1:8-9, Prov 27:20**
- A lake of fire - **Rev 20:15**
- Unquenched fire - **Mark 9:43-48**
- A place of death and wickedness- **Psalm 55:15, 9:17**
- A place of torment - **Luke 16:23, 25**
- A place of sorrow - **Psalm 18:5, 2Sam 22:6**
- A place of condemnation - **Matt 23:33**

Understanding hell

Hell also known as Gehenna or Gehinnom was a place in the earth found in the valley of the son of Hinnom.

This was also bordering Jerusalem, the holy city of God. **Joshua 15:8**

In this valley, they worshipped the abomination of Molech, giving human sacrifices and so an altar burned with fire there continuously. **2kings 23:10**

This represents hell, a lake of fire, burning continuously.

This place was later destroyed by King Josiah.

To learn from this very picture: the people in Jerusalem represent the people in eternal life while people outside Jerusalem represent people in hell.

We start experiencing this life while on earth. Life outside God means life in hell - and the ruling god there being Molech (Satan) while life in God means eternal life, with God. Once we die, we are just perfected in the life we have already been living on earth.

Understanding hades

After the fall of man, heaven was shut with no access. The souls of all who died would then go to hades - both good and evil. While they were both in hades, there were still two distinct places: Abraham's bosom where the righteous would go and the burning fire where the evil would go. **Luke 16:19-31**

However, when Jesus died and was buried, He took away authority from the devil, overcame death and reconciled man back to God.

The dead rose from their graves (from hades) when Jesus died and were seen in Jerusalem **Matt 27:52-53** to testify of the victory Jesus had achieved through His death on the cross.

Today, when we die believing in Jesus, our souls are taken into heaven waiting for eternal judgement **Rev 6:9-11** because now heaven is opened to all who believe in Jesus. They are no longer caught up in hades!

Luke 23:43

After laying the foundations, the church can then go on to perfection!

“Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.”

Hebrews 6:1-2.