

# The Mars Hill Messenger

September 5, 2021

<p><b>Sunday, September 5, 2021</b> <b><u>SOUND ROOM</u></b> Clay Winn <b><u>ANNOUNCEMENTS</u></b> Rodney Partee <b><u>SCRIPTURE READING</u></b> Curtis Sawrie <b><u>LEAD SINGING</u></b> Thomas Martin <b><u>LEAD PRAYER</u></b> Troy Buchanan Wade Haynie <b><u>LORD'S TABLE</u></b> Dan Blair, b. Doug Ellison, c. Michael Hunter, o. Jerrod Partee</p>	<p><b>Wednesday September 8, 2021</b> <b><u>LEAD SINGING</u></b> Harmon Sawrie <b><u>LEAD PRAYER</u></b> Mark Mauney Harold Moody</p> <p><b>Bible Class Lessons</b> <b>Wednesday, Sept. 8:</b> Lesson #327 "Parable of the Unrighteous Steward" <b>Sunday, Sept. 12:</b> Lesson #328 "The Rich Man and Lazarus; Sin, Faith, and Duty" <b>Wednesday, Sept. 15:</b> Lesson #329 "Raising Lazarus"</p>	<p>Dale Haynie is undergoing tests on his kidneys. Mary Mcgonical's surgery has been postponed. Carlton Clayton is recovering from eye surgery. Kim Wells is recovering from surgery. Dennis Kirkland is recovering from surgery to remove kidney stones. Paula Stocks will be undergoing tests on her liver. Melanie Gordon is undergoing cancer treatments. Leroy Kirkland, Dennis Kirkland's father, is recovering from heart surgery. Michelle Koone of the Vilonia congregation is in ICU and gravely ill. Gail Harlow, Ralph Hunter and Dorothy Glover's sister, is having heart problems.</p> <p>Roy Bulice, Ova Lea Leighton, Bernice Wells, Martha Walker, Gunner Smith, Gladys Widner, Charlene Lasley, Steven Moore</p>
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**Sympathy:** Shelia Riddle passed away this past week. Our love and sympathy are extended to the family. A Celebration of Life will be held at the Mars Hill building on Saturday, October 2<sup>nd</sup>. A meal will be served at noon and the memorial service will begin at 2 p.m. Those attending are requested to wear purple or camouflage.

**Baptism:** Juli Thompson was baptized into Christ Thursday evening. We rejoice with her and welcome her to the family of God.

**Wacky Pack Day:** Sunday, September 26<sup>th</sup>, after services. For kids, parents, and teachers of Grades 1-4. Wacky Packs from Sonic, fun, and fellowship.

## THE THIEF ON THE CROSS

"Baptism isn't essential for salvation. The thief on the cross wasn't baptized (Luke 23:39-43)." That's the approach many religious people take. But is that really what is taught here?

**How do we KNOW that the thief was not baptized?** This is often assumed by people, but it has never been proven! Where did anyone get the idea that the thief was not baptized? They didn't get that idea from the Bible! John, the baptizer, had been preaching and the Bible says, "and were all baptized by him" (Mark 1:1-5). I realize that this means, "virtually all," because we know that some rejected John's baptism (Luke 7:29-30). But notice that the text says that only "the Pharisees and lawyers" rejected John's baptism. Jesus Himself had been preaching and the Bible says that Jesus "made and baptized more disciples than John" (John 4:1-2). Could the thief on the cross have been in that number? Certainly! So, we can't just assume that he was never baptized.

**The thief may have been baptized!** In the brief glimpse we have into the life of the thief, we see that the thief feared God (Luke 23:39-40). He knew that Jesus was a sinless man (v.41), he knew that Jesus was "Lord" (i.e., master or king), and He had a "kingdom" (v.42). He knew that Jesus could "remember" him when He became King (v.42). It is clear that this thief has knowledge of Jesus that could have only come from exposure to his teaching. While this is by no means conclusive evidence, it does raise the possibility that the thief was baptized!

**Also notice WHEN the thief was forgiven of sins.** It is very important to note that he was forgiven before the death of Jesus (v.43-46). Why do I point this out? Because the New Covenant had not yet gone into effect (Hebrews 9:15-17). The Bible says that a covenant does not go into effect until a death has taken place. Think of it like a "last will and testament." You make a will, which can be altered by you at any time in your life; but once you die, your "will" goes into effect. This is the very argument the Hebrew writer is making! After the death of Jesus, His "will" (the New Covenant) went into effect. The will of Jesus clearly says, "He who believes and is baptized will be saved" (Mark 16:16; Ac. 2:38; 22:16). To illustrate, consider the situation where you are approaching a red stop light, but there is a police officer who "overrules" that light and motions you through. As long as the officer is there, he can motion you through as he sees fit; but once he leaves, the stop light controls the traffic. Likewise, while Jesus was here, He could save people as He saw fit; but once He ascended to Heaven, His will (the traffic light) takes control of the situation!

**The real issue is: What is the will of Jesus today?** And the answer is clearly revealed by both Jesus and His apostles. You must be baptized for the forgiveness of sins (Matthew 28:18-20; Mark 16:16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; 22:16; Romans 6:4; 1 Peter 3:21). Why not do the will of Jesus today?