

No! We can't allow this verse to cancel out all the other words of God! Do those other verses mean that we don't need to be baptized? No! The Word of God does not disagree. We must simply add baptism into the process that we see developing throughout God's Word, line upon line, here a little, there a little!

Faith is not the beginning or end of our salvation. Before faith, God had to offer His grace. After faith, man must accept God's saving grace through the plan that God has explained in His Word. If we love God, we will obey His commands. "For this is the love of God, that we keep his commandments: and his commandments are not grievous." (1 John 5:3) God has not asked anything difficult of us. He simply wants us to love and obey His Word.

Of course, baptism is not the last command that God has given. "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:4) After our baptism, we begin a new life in Christ. Does this contradict the verses about belief and love? No. This new life is based on the faith and love that brought us to God in the first place. This new life is a continuation of God's plan for our salvation. It is a life that turns to God's Word to find what He expects out of us.

Please open your Bible and search for the truth. Do not settle for one verse and ignore all others. Instead, study all of God's Word and see that it reveals the precious truth, here a little, there a little. "And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John 8:32)

Why Is The Bible Written This Way?

You might ask, "Why isn't the Bible just written like an encyclopedia where I can find all the information on any subject in one place?" The answer is given in the book of Isaiah. "But the word of the LORD was unto them precept upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little; that they might go, and fall backward, and be broken, and snared, and taken." (Isaiah 28:13) God in infinite wisdom designed the Bible with two purposes.

For the proud, Isaiah says that the Bible is a trap. They look at the Bible and see a worthless series of stories. They do not study the Word to see the beautiful wisdom etched into every line. For the humble who are willing to study the Bible, the Bible is an illustrated guide. Instead of simply stating truth, the Bible shows it in the lives of Bible characters. The messages of God are spread out to be learned patiently through honest study, so to understand the Bible, we must listen to the words of Paul, "Study to show thyself approved unto God, a workman that needs not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." (2 Timothy 2:15)

Here A Little, There A Little

Written by Benjamin J. Williams

6001 Gardner Drive

Oklahoma City, OK 73150

Here A Little, There A Little

"For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little."

Isaiah 28:10

The Word of God is not always written like a novel or newspaper. It contains poetry and narratives, laws and prophecy, genealogies and census reports. In addition, the Bible is not written like an encyclopedia where everything you need to know on a given subject can be found on one page.

Instead, the Bible weaves its precious doctrine through the stories and lessons taught throughout all 66 books. As the prophet Isaiah said, “For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little” (Isaiah 28:10). Lets look at an example.

Was Jesus Just a Man?

In many passages in the Bible, Jesus is called a man. Paul wrote, “For there is one God, and one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus” (1 Timothy 2:5). Clearly the Bible calls Jesus a man in this passage, but is that all the Bible says about Him?

After the resurrection of Christ from the dead, we read of this scene: “And after eight days again his disciples were within, and Thomas with them: then came Jesus, the doors being shut, and stood in the midst, and said, Peace be unto you. Then saith he to Thomas, Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side: and be not faithless, but believing. And Thomas answered and said unto him, My Lord and my God.” (John 20:26-28) Thomas the apostle said that Jesus was in fact God.

What do we do about this situation? Is there a contradiction in the Bible? Is Jesus man or God?

The answer is that the Bible does not say

everything there is to know about Jesus in one place. Jesus is both man and God!

“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made. ... And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth.” (John 1:1-3, 14) John declares that this person he calls the Word was God and that the Word put on flesh and blood as a man. Jesus Christ is the Word made flesh. He is both God and man.

In this case, reading just one verse would not have settled the issue for us. We needed to study and read several verses to know the truth. Perhaps this is why one Bible writer praised God for the sum total of God’s Word, “How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! how great is the sum of them!” (Psalms 139:17)

What About Salvation?

If we needed to look at several verses to learn about Jesus, don’t you think that we should look at several verses to see what He has said about the salvation that He offers?

Clearly, the Bible teaches that salvation is the result of God’s love for man shown in Christ. “For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.” (John 3:16) If this was the only verse we read, we might conclude that believing is all that God requires of us to enjoy His grace. But what does the rest of the Bible say?

“Beloved, let us love one another: for love is

of God; and every one that loves is born of God, and knows God.” (I John 4:7) This passage tells us that we must have love to be saved. Which one is it? Do we have to believe or love? The answer is both! We must believe and love to be saved.

“I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” (Luke 13:3) Now we have another command. Which one is it? Do we have to believe and love or repent to be saved? The answer is both! We must believe, love, and repent to be saved.

“That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believes unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” (Romans 10:9-10) Once again, we read about salvation, only this time it is the result of belief and confession of the name of Christ. Does this verse contradict the verses we read about love and repentance? Does this verse cancel out the verses we read about love and repentance? No! We simply need to add one more element to the process of God’s salvation. God expects us to believe, to love, to repent, and to confess Jesus to be saved.

“The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ” (1 Peter 3:21). Now we have another verse with another part of our salvation. Many come to this verse and forget the important lesson that we have learned. We must consider all that God has said on a subject to understand it. In this verse, God has simply said that baptism saves us. Does that mean that we don’t need to believe, love, repent, or confess Jesus?