

In the back of the auditorium there is a little black box. It's not fancy, but it is useful. Each week I go to the little black box in the back of the auditorium and peer inside. Do you know what I find? I find questions that people write down and put in the little black box. For the most part, the questions are very good and cause a great deal of study on my behalf. Yet, some are very easy to answer and then there are those like the one I received not long ago that let's me know they are listening. The question was written by a young man who has not yet put the Lord on in baptism and it is my hopes that by happenstance during the summer rush that he is able to sit down and read this article. I certainly believe this young man's heart is in the right place and my most sincere prayer is that one day soon I may not only call him friend, but my brother in Christ as well.

The question reads; "Joe—Why is it so hard to get baptized when you really want to but don't feel ready?" I don't get questions like this very much and the question itself is not that hard to answer, yet when someone feels as if they want to be baptized proves to me that they are really listening. It also proves that God's Word is being reinforced in that young person's mind at home as well. With most of our young people thinking about everything from some type of ballgame to what kind of clothes are in style—this young man has been thinking about the eternal resting place of his soul. You know reader; we can learn so many things from the mindset of a child if we just take the time to do it.

So what is the answer? To be honest I think the young man answered his own question without realizing it. Getting baptized is not hard. In fact, the entire act of getting baptized takes only mere minutes to complete. However, it is the act of walking faithfully with God after the fact of baptism that needs to be addressed as well. When one believes that Jesus is the Son of God they are stating a great and magnificent fact. To believe in something means we first must have faith and trust in that something. Jesus, our Savior, ask that we believe in Him (John 8:32). Next the scriptures state that we must understand what repentance is. Luke explains this as he writes to us the words of Jesus in Luke 13:1-5. Repentance is turning away from those sinful things that seek to destroy our very souls. It is turning away from evil and turning to God. Christ then asks, or better yet, commands that we confess Him before mankind in Matthew 10:32-33. This confession is not a one time affair. It is not a carnival ride that only lasts a short time. Confessing Christ as our Savior and Lord is a lifetime of remembering His sacrifice, His death, His burial, and His resurrection. We are commanded to confess Him so He will confess us before the Father in heaven. We are then commanded to be baptized into His death and raised to walk in the newness of life (Romans 6:4). Revelation 21:8 then tells us to walk with Him faithfully until death. The scriptures are full of encouragement to continue our daily walk with Jesus in the light; to show our love for all by demonstrating God's love for us. However, the question remains: "...but I don't feel ready..."

Not only must one desire to serve God through Jesus when they put Him on in baptism, it must be decided to live a faithful life with Him here so we may become heirs of His salvation. It is my opinion that when someone begins asking the questions about baptism and what it really is that they are on their way to being ready. The age of accountability is different for each person. That person must decide to be baptized so they might glorify God through Christ in their lives. Babies and little children don't need to be baptized because they can't sin since they don't fully know good from bad. They are still innocent, and baptism is to save sinners. Those of us who are able to recognize sin must be baptized through immersion in water - even if we were sprinkled as babies, baptized in some other way, or went through some sort of confirmation ceremony. Water baptism is part of our new covenant with God. And, since we enter into a covenant with God, we have to be mentally able to know what we are doing and saying and why.

It is my hope that the young man who wrote this question has the opportunity to read this article. It is also my hope that we all take the time to look at our baptism and be ready and willing to serve the Living God each day of our lives. Good friends, are you ready? I pray you are and look forward to the opportunity to serve God together with you and to look down the battle line and see you wearing the full armor of God and ready to take the battle to the devil himself.