

THE SINNER'S PRAYER

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Recently my wife and I went into a sandwich shop to eat lunch. On the counter was a stack of booklets titled, "God's Simple Plan of Salvation." Later as I read the material I came across two statements which caught my attention.

On salvation the booklet had:

Just pray: Oh God, I know I am a sinner. I believe Jesus was my substitute when He died on the cross. I believe His shed blood, death, burial and resurrection were for me. I now receive Him as my Savior. Thank you for the forgiveness of my sins and the gift of salvation and everlasting life, because of your merciful grace. Amen.

It is interesting to note that in the Bible conversions, not one single person was commanded to pray "the sinner's prayer." Simon the sorcerer was commanded to repent and pray for forgiveness (Acts 8:22), but he had already believed and had been baptized (Acts 8: 13), Simon was a believer (Christian) who had sinned and was instructed on how he could obtain forgiveness. The answer to the question of the alien sinner, "What must I do to be saved?" is clearly set forth in Acts 2:22-47:

- ◆ Peter preached Jesus Christ
- ◆ The people were convicted
- ◆ Convinced of their sin, they asked for instructions
- ◆ Peter answered their question
- ◆ They obeyed Peter's instructions
- ◆ God added them to the church

On baptism the booklet mentioned above had:

You should be baptized in obedience to the Lord Jesus Christ as a public testimony of your salvation, and then unite with a Bible believing church without delay.

Nowhere in the Bible do you read that people were baptized or told to be baptized "as a public testimony of one's salvation." You do read in the Bible that baptism was:

- ◆ For remission of sins—Acts 2:38
- ◆ To wash away sins—Acts 22:16
- ◆ To put one into Christ—Gal. 3:27
- ◆ To unite the sinner with the death of Jesus Christ—Rom. 6:3-4
- ◆ For salvation—1 Pet. 3:21; Mark 16:16~

Deceased