

**DUTY LIST...**

**SUNDAY MORNING**

- Announcements.....Michael Pickford
- Scripture Reading...Michael Pickford Reading:
- Song Leader.....Michael Pickford
- Opening Prayer.....Kenny Todd
- Lord's Table:
  - Lead.....Kenny Johnson
  - Serve.....Robert Johnson
- Closing Prayer.....Lynn Buttrey

**SUNDAY EVENING**

- Song Leader.... Kenny Todd
- Opening Prayer...TBA
- Invitation: N/A
- Lord's Table: Kenny Todd
- Closing Prayer: TBA

**WEDNESDAY EVENING**

- Song Leader...Michael Pickford
- Invitation: Kenny Johnson

**God's Plan of Salvation**

There is only one true saving plan of Salvation outlined in Scripture. No substitutes will do. Have you really been saved? Get out your Bible and study the plan below.

- Hear the Gospel: Romans 10:17
- Believe: Mark 16:16; John 8:24
- Repent of Sin: Acts 2:38; Acts 17:30
- Confess Faith: Romans 10:9, 10
- Be Baptized: Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Acts 22:16; 1 Peter 3:21
- Remain Faithful: Rev. 2:10

**Obey Today!**

We would welcome a visit from you. Our meeting times are:

SUNDAYS: 9 & 10 AM & 6 PM / WEDNESDAYS: 7 PM

Capable Bible teachers would be delighted to study with you at your request and convenience.

This bulletin is designed and produced by our evangelist, Michael Pickford.

Please visit our website at [www.defendthegospel.com](http://www.defendthegospel.com)

Bible Correspondance Courses Available At Your Request.

**SOUTHSIDE  
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

1167 South Lowry Street, Smyrna TN 37167, 615-991-8594

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All Articles written and edited by Michael Pickford unless otherwise noted

**The Eye Of Respect**

*“The eye that mocks his father, and scorns obedience to his mother, the ravens of the valley will pick it out, and the young eagles will eat it”* (Proverbs 30:17). The powerful and striking imagery of this verse shows us that there are consequences for disrespecting and disobeying our parents. Disrespect toward them potentially leads to a miserable life of unwise choices and behavior, as symbolized by the ravens and vultures. We must honor our parents not merely out of tradition or obedience but from a heart of gratitude and respect based on all they do and have done for us. This honor is not just shown through grand gestures, but in the simple, everyday acts of love, kindness, and patience. Listening when they speak, valuing their wisdom, and car-

**Memory Verse**

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother...”  
—Ephesians 6:1-2

ing for them when they are older. How we treat our parents can often be reflected in the way we treat other people in our lives. If we mock and scorn our parents, we're more likely to eventually extend the same attitudes to others, even if we think we won't. Relationships with parents can be complex, often fraught with hurt, misunderstanding, and disappointment. Parents are human and will make mistakes and bad decisions, but the commandment to honor and respect remains. Thanking God often for your parents will help develop an attitude of respect. -MP

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## Is Baptism Essential For Salvation?

In the title, I am asking if it is essential for one to get baptized to wash away his sins and be saved.

1. Baptism is essential if you want to believe the Lord. Jesus stated, *“he who believes and is baptized will be saved”* (Mark 16:16). Note that faith and baptism are essential for salvation based on this verse.
2. Baptism is essential if you want to get into Christ. *“For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus, for as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ”* (Galatians 3:26-27). Salvation is only found in Christ. There is no salvation on the outside of Christ. Paul mentioned *“...the salvation which is in Christ Jesus”* (2 Timothy 2:10). Galatians 3:26-27, Like Mark 16:16, does not pit faith against baptism. It makes both essential. In short, one who believes gets into Christ where salvation is by being baptized.
3. Baptism is essential if you want your sins washed away. One cannot be reunited with God until his sin, that which separates, is removed (Isaiah 59:1-2; Romans 6:23). The blood of Christ alone washes away one’s sins (1 Peter 1:18-19; Ephesians 1:7; Revelation 1:5). But when does Christ’s blood connect with one’s sins and remove them? The answer is stated clearly in Acts 22:16 when Ananias said to Saul (Paul), *“Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins...”*
4. Baptism is essential if one wants to be saved. The verses in the points above clearly associate baptism with obtaining salvation. One can’t be saved if he disbelieves the Lord, is not in Christ, and does not have his sins washed away. But Peter comes right out and states that baptism saves in 1 Peter 3:21, *“There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism.”* If you have not been baptized into Christ, why are you waiting?

-Michael Pickford

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## Understanding God’s Word

*“Therefore, do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.”*

-Ephesians 5:17

Understanding God's will may, at times, seem a daunting task. The complexity and profundity of parts of God's word can be intimidating. Yet, as the Apostle Paul assures us in Ephesians 5:17, God desires us to understand His will.

Paul's writings, inspired by God like the rest of scripture, can be understood (Ephesians 3:3-4). Much of God’s word is easy to read and understand, while other parts are “hard” or difficult to understand (2 Peter 3:16). Not impossible, but difficult. The key to comprehension lies in our desire to do God's will, as Jesus taught in John 7:17.

But what does it mean to have a "desire to do God's will"? It means we surrender our personal desires and ambitions to God's sovereign purpose. It means we develop a humble and obedient heart, willing to learn and obey God's commands regardless of any necessary sacrifice.

Claiming that God's word is incomprehensible is dangerous. It either suggests that God was inadequate in conveying His will clearly, which questions His omnipotence, or it implies that God willingly withheld clear communication, which indicts Him of indifference and cruelty. It's inconceivable to consider a God who commands obedience to His word under threat of eternal punishment yet obscures that word beyond our understanding.

If we approach God's word with a teachable spirit, a heart inclined to obey, and a mind prepared to ponder, and then pray to God for wisdom and understanding as we read and study diligently, we will understand His word.

-Michael Pickford

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