



truly, I say to you, except a man born from on high cannot see the Kingdom of God" (John 3:3)

He further clarifies this phrase: *"Truly, truly, I say to you, except a man be born of water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God" (John 3:5).* Therefore, Baptism is that door through which we can enter the Church only of those who are saved. For only those who have faith and are baptized will be saved. (Mark 16:16).



Baptism blots out the corruption of 'ancestral sin,' and blots out the guilt of all sins previously committed by the one being baptized.



**Receive the Holy Spirit:** "And if the Spirit of Him who raised Jesus from the dead dwells in you, He who raised Christ from the dead will also give life to your mortal bodies by His Spirit who dwells in you" (Romans 8:11). "... through the laying on of the hands of the Apostles the Holy Spirit was given" (Acts 8:18)

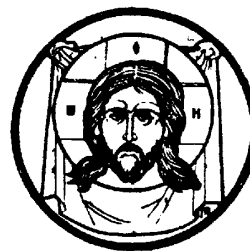
In this way, by the laying on of the hands of the Apostles, the new disciples received the Holy Spirit as the first disciples had received it in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost: the gift of Pentecost was perpetuated and is perpetuated; it is what we call the mystery of Chrismation, from the Greek word *Chrisma* meaning "anointing" — since it is the anointing of the Holy Spirit by which we become "anointed" of the Holy Spirit, little Christs, "Christians."

Nowadays this mystery is usually celebrated immediately after Baptism, by an anointing with perfumed oil, as was the case for the chrismation of King David.



## APOLOGETICAL CATECHESIS

### IF I ACCEPT JESUS AS SAVIOUR AND LORD, AM I ALREADY SAVED?



Some Christian sects or groups tell us the following: *"If you are sincere, repent of your sins and simply pray, saying, 'Jesus, have mercy on me a sinner and save me.' God will forgive him, make him a new creature, and he will live a happy life in this world and enter into eternal joy there in heaven."*

According to this doctrine, when a person is converted to Christ, from that moment on he/she is destined for heaven. They call that moment when a person accepts Christ "born again," "new birth."

They also believe that salvation cannot be lost. That once Christ is accepted by faith, salvation is assured. We can hear sermons saying that "once saved, always saved."

These groups believe that all it takes to be saved is faith. The notion of instant and forever salvation is not consistent with the Holy Tradition of the Church. God does not stuff salvation to those who do not cooperate with it.

The question... *Are you saved?* ...has three answers.



**I was saved:** by the Passion, Death, and Resurrection of Christ. He died on the cross for the salvation of all mankind. If it were not for this sacrifice, we could not be saved now or later.

**I am being saved:** if I live my life according to the teachings of our Lord Jesus Christ and His Church. I can also say the opposite: I am not being saved because I have

## ORTHODOX ANSWERS 5





turned away from the teachings of Christ, I have turned my back on God and His Church.

**I Will Be Saved:** When I am judged at the end of my earthly life and am found worthy of Eternal Life with the Holy Trinity.

Then, and only then, can we answer with great conviction: Yes, I am saved!

Let's see what the Holy Scriptures say:

**I was saved:** *"For you have been saved by grace through faith; and this is not of you, but is a gift from God" (Ephesians 2:8).*

**I'm being saved:** *"Now that I'm gone, work with fear and trembling for your salvation..." (Philippians 2:12).*

*"For the message of the cross is foolishness to those who perish, but to us who are being saved, it is the power of God" (1 Corinthians 1:18; GIB, NIV, NKJV).*

**I Will Be Saved:** *"And ye shall be hated of all men for my name's sake; but he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Mark 13:13).*

*"... In the same way, Christ, after having offered himself once = to take away the sins of the multitude, = will appear a second time, no longer related to sin to those who are waiting for him for their salvation. (Hebrews 9:28).*



Some non-Orthodox Christians believe that they are certain of their salvation and that this salvation is by faith alone.

The Orthodox Church has always taught and still teaches that Salvation is a gift from God through Jesus Christ. No one can be saved by anyone other than our Lord Jesus, the Son of God.

But can faith alone save us? God gives us a firm hope of salvation, but He does not give us absolute certainty: *"For our salvation is in hope; And a hope that is seen is not hope, for how is it possible to hope for a thing that is seen? But to wait for what we do not see is to wait patiently" (Romans 8:24-25).*



Any one of us can turn away from God, we can choose to lead a life of sin and destruction... and lose hope of heaven. We need perseverance to save ourselves.

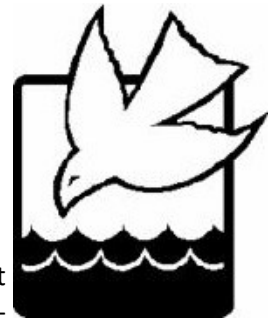
*"But he that endureth to the end shall be saved" (Matthew 24:13). "Therefore, let him who thinks he is standing take heed lest he fall" (1 Corinthians 10:12).*

So how do we get saved?

The jailer asked the Apostle Paul this question: *"Sirs, what must I do to save myself?" (Acts 16:30).* And the answer was, *"Have faith in the Lord Jesus, and you and your house will be saved" (v. 31).* The same question was asked of the Apostle Peter by some people *"with heavy hearts," and he answered them: "Repent, and let each one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:38).*

To save ourselves we must:

- ◆ Repent.
- ◆ Believe in Jesus Christ.
- ◆ To be baptized for the remission of sins.
- ◆ Receive the Holy Spirit.



**Repentance:** Sin has led us away from God. We must accept the saving call of Grace. We accept it and re-make ourselves, firmly resolving to turn away from sin and walk in repentance to Heavenly Father. We walk along the path of repentance, and the Father comes out to meet us, accepting us, forgetting everything, and with as much love as ever.

**Believe in Jesus Christ:** The beginning of that truly Christian life that saves us comes only from Christ the Saviour. He is the only way to Heavenly Father. *"For if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord, and believe with your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" (Romans 10:9-10).*

**Baptism for the Remission of Sins:** In His conversation with Nicodemus about how one enters the Kingdom of God, our Saviour replied, *"Truly,*

