

Faith Comes From Hearing Christian Preaching

by Ausbund

Faith comes from hearing Christian preaching, and baptism is a covenant of a good conscience, promising to live in God's will.

Scripture: Genesis 3:1, Matthew 6:24, Matthew 27:3, Acts 2:44, Acts 5:1, Romans 10:17, Ephesians 4:22, 1 Peter 3:21

Topics: "Faith And Baptism", "Christian Living"

Description

Hans Betz preaches on the significance of faith coming from hearing Christian preaching, leading to the necessity of baptism as a covenant of a good conscience and a promise to live in God's will. Baptism symbolizes being clean in Christ and putting on His righteousness, shedding away lust, sin, and deceit. He emphasizes the importance of living in God's commune, free from greed and private property, and highlights the consequences of greed as seen in biblical examples like Ananias and Judas. Betz stresses the purity and holiness required in God's commune, where members share their gifts for the glory of God and live in unity.

Transcript

Faith comes from hearing Christian preaching, then when a person believes, he must be baptized. Baptism in Christ is the covenant of a good conscience. . . . the promise to live from this point onward in the will of God. We make a promise to God in baptism that we are bound to keep. Like a wife is subject to her husband here on the earth, so we become subject to Christ when we marry him in baptism.

Baptism alone will not wash you from lust and sin. It only shows that you are clean in Christ. The righteousness of Christ is the garment you are to put on in baptism, when lust, sin, and deceit -- your Adam -- is washed away....

God's commune holds only to the customs of God. Its Gemeinschaft is in Jesus Christ and in his true peace. Like bread made of many grains that have all become one loaf, so is God's commune which had freed itself from private property.

No person can live with a desire for wealth in God's commune. Where there is greed the Lord Christ is not. Greed is of the devil. The devil was the first to take Eigentum (private property) when he rebelled against God, the creator of life. For this reason God drove him out and consigned him to hell. The devil wanted to

be like God (the true owner of property), but God could not tolerate that. . .

History tells us about greed. God gave the Israelites manna to eat. But those who gathered more than they needed found it full of worms. . . . Ananias, driven by greed lied to the Holy Ghost and God punished him. Judas, driven by greed, ended up hanging himself. In this way God punishes the greedy.

Everything on this earth was created to be free. The one who claims it as private property breaks the command and robs the glory of God. For this reason he will receive his wages with the rich man in hell.

God's commune, washed in the blood of Christ, is to be holy and pure. He who wants to be in it must purify himself by giving all that he has to be used for the glory of God. He gives to his neighbour as he has freely received. . . . Oh how pleasant it is in Jesus Christ where brothers live together in unity and have all their property in common!

The members of Christ share their spiritual and material gifts because they hold the kingdom of God in common. . . . They alone are the bride of Christ. . . . Oh commune of God, keep your marriage pure! Do not let yourself be carried away!

Turn from the enemy and his teachings. Do not let yourself be tricked like Eve who paid attention to his talk. Even if the serpent tries hard and long, do not let yourself be moved. Always follow Christ and you will live with him forever. . . .

-- Hans Betz, Ausbund, 108:5-6

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