

Andre Baptism Testimony

Good morning family,

In September of 2018, I went to Washington, DC to participate in Capitol Hill Baptist Church's Weekender. In one of the earlier sessions that they had, the pastor of the church asked everyone to stand up as he counted down the number of years that the Weekenders have been saved. He started with the oldest and counted down to the newest Christian. I had a dilemma because I didn't know when I should have sat down. Have I been a Christian for 22 years or for 10 years?

For a long time I believed that I had already been baptized. When I was six, I told my mother that I was ready for baptism because I believed that's just what church members do. I was sold on that there was a God and that He loved me and I was giving my life to him. I thought that's what baptism was. Even when I climbed into the water, the man who dunked me asked me, as he did every baptizee, *"Why do you want to be baptized?"*. My response was that *"God gave something to me and I wanted to give something [my life] to Him"*. It sounds consistent with Scripture but I knew in my heart of hearts that I really didn't know what it was that God gave me. I actually remember thinking about what I was going to say while I was standing in line waiting my turn because I knew that I was going to be asked. My response to the man didn't come from a true understanding of the Cross therefore I wasn't baptized.

Thirteen years later, God would direct my life path to collide with a campus minister who I knew, at the time, as Brother Woods. This campus minister was unlike any other Christian that I'd met in that he approached the Bible with not only his heart but his mind. This intrigued me so I committed to attending Bible Study where he taught. After a few weeks, I came to the realization that all that he had been preaching and teaching from God's word were elementary to the faith—the faith that said I professed for so long—but I couldn't articulate it. I didn't know it. I remember like it was yesterday. I had baptized in the Spirit. The Spirit made alive my soul to hear the Gospel of Jesus Christ, understand it, and accept it with my whole heart. It was then that I understood that a holy God created a man named Adam but Adam sinned against Him. Because I am in Adam, I was born into sin and shaped in iniquity. I *hated* God. Since God is holy, He must deal with me according to His holiness. I am under God's wrath. I stand condemn to eternal damnation because God's law stands against me with it's legal demands. *But God* in His great love, sent His Son, Jesus Christ, to live the perfect life that I could not live. He died the death that I deserved. And the best part is that He rose from the grave conquering sin and death.

God the Spirit has made me alive. God the Father has drawn me close. God the Son has saved me. Where I stood condemned, I now stand pardoned. Where I stood as a hostile enemy to God, I now have been adopted into His family. Where I was bound in chains, I am now free. He calls me son. He calls me friend. Back when I was college, I repented of my sin and today I am announcing to all of the world through baptism that I have placed my faith in Jesus Christ.

Thank you all for being here with me.