

Intro.

- A. Have you ever felt like you were *stuck in reverse*???
1. I once drove a VW that got stuck in 2nd gear, & no one had to tell me it was time to see a mechanic!
 2. You may have had the horrible experience of transmission problems, and you either had no reverse, or you were stuck in reverse.
 3. Any way you look at it, being stuck in reverse is a bad thing. There is a spiritual lesson that I think parallels being stuck in reverse.
- B. We will do well to remember the Lord's words to Moses as he was starting construction of the tabernacle.
1. God told him to *make all things according to the pattern.* c. **Heb. 8:5** **Josh. 22:28** ↩
 2. Years later, Joshua told the Israelites: *Behold the pattern of the alter of the Lord, which our fathers mad*
- C. Keeping in mind that God has wisely set forth patterns to be followed in religion, let's notice some things that men have reversed considering the order in which God gave them.

Discuss.**I. FAITH & REPENTANCE HAVE BEEN REVERSED.**

- A. There are men who have taught a doctrine of *faith only* as a result of reversing the order of faith & repent.
1. Those who teach a sinner is justified by *faith alone* claim that repentance come before faith.
 2. Even if repentance did precede faith, this would overthrow the idea of salvation by faith only!
- B. Many on Pentecost were already believers, but they were told salvation would follow *repentance* **Ac.2:38**
1. Peter told them to repent....for the remission of sins.
 2. Proper motivation to repent only comes when we appreciate who Christ is, & what hope He offers.

II. THE ORDER OF SALVATION & BAPTISM HAVE BEEN REVERSED.

- A. Some men teach that salvation comes *before* baptism, but this teaching is exactly reverse of Bible truth.
1. Jesus said, *He who believes & is baptized will be saved...* **Mk. 16:16(a)**
 2. This absolutely teaches that 1)faith + 2)baptism precedes *salvation*
- B. All other N. T. passages that address the subject of baptism & salvation follow the pattern of **Mk. 16:16**
1. In **Ac. 2:38** Peter explained that baptism comes before remission of sins.
 2. Paul rehearsed the truth he obeyed in **Ac. 22:16** as he was told *...be baptized & wash away your sins.*
 3. An identical order of events = **Rom. 6:3-4** being *buried...in baptism, & rising to walk in newness of life*
 4. It is not surprising that Peter declared that *baptism...saves us,* (**c. 1 Pet. 3:21**)

III. MEN HAVE TURNED PRAYER & BAPTISM AROUND.

- A. There are many religious leaders today who say that sinners need to pray (*a sinners prayer*) to be saved, & then – as a Christian – to be baptized as a statement of his faith.
1. Again, this is the very reverse of Biblical teaching.
 2. Never was a lost sinner told to pray to become a child of God, neither was a Christian ever told to be bapt
- B. In looking at the truth of God's word we find...
1. **Jn. 9:31** that God does N-O-T hear the prayer of a sinner!!!
 2. Only those like Simon the Sorcerer (who was a weak & erring Christian) were told to pray for forgiveness, **Ac. 8:12-13, 22**
 3. In the account of righteous named Cornelious (c. **Ac. 10:2-4, 6, 43, 47f**), he HAD TO BE BAPTIZED!

IV. SOME REVERSE THE ORDER OF ONE GOING INTO THE WATER. (they bring water to the person.)


- A. Those who practice sprinkling & pouring often bring water to the recipients, rather than taking a person to a body of water.
- B. Even in the example of Christ, we see His *fulfilling all righteousness* involved His going to John for immersion, **Mt. 3:13.**

1. You will recall the account of the Ethiopian eunuch's conversion (**Ac. 8:36-38**), *they came to a certain water... & they both went down into the water... & he baptized him..*
2. If you had a preacher or other religious leader bring a cup of water to you when you were supposed to be being baptized, instead of you going to be buried in a body of water, then your religion is in reverse

V. MANY HAVE REVERSED THE ORDER OF THE KINGDOM OF CHRIST & OTHER THINGS.

- A. The *things* we may acquire in this life often take priority before Christ and His kingdom (the church).
 1. Others let the pursuit of pleasure so control their life that the work of the Lord takes a back seat to sports, or other sorts of recreation. (**Mt. 6:33; Col. 1:18**)
 2. I have know of brethren who would actually put company ahead of the assemblies of the church.
 3. Ask yourself, in my giving, is it obvious to God that His kingdom is first in my life's priorities???

Concl.

- B. The Bible order is, *Seek first the kingdom of God & His righteousness, & all these things shall be added...*
 1. If your religion is stuck in reverse, it will never get you to where you want to go successfully.
 2. If you're a child of God who is just ready to turn your life back around and put things in proper order in your life spiritually, come & let us pray with you so that the burden of sin you've been carrying may be lifted from your shoulders by the Savior.
 3. If you are one of those we have described who have sincerely wanted and tried to obey God, but have attempted doing that *in reverse*, then we encourage you to come in obedience to God's will right now.
- C. Let me tell you the Bible order for the obedient:
 1. **Listen** to the truth of God's word, not as a forgetful hearer, but as an obedient doer of God's will. 
 2. **Believe** it with all you heart, **Ac. 8:37** **Rom. 10:17**
 3. Be ready to turn you back on sin as you **repent**, ready to face God & follow His instructions **Ac. 17:30**
 4. You need to **confess** your faith that Jesus Christ is THE Son of God, **Mt. 16:16 (Rom. 10:10)**
 5. We will be happy to immerse you in water for the remission of you sins, **Mk. 16:16**