

Where is the Sinner's Prayer?

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EXAMPLES OF CONVERSION IN THE BOOK OF ACTS					
CONVERSION ACCOUNT	BELIEVE	REPENT	CONFESS CHRIST	BE BAPTIZED	AFTER WATER BAPTISM
3000 saved (Acts 2)	Believed (v37)	Repented (v37, 38)		Baptized (v38-41)	Remission of sins (v38)
Samaritans (Acts 8)	Believed (v12)			Baptized (v12)	
Simon (Acts 8)	Believed (v13)			Baptized (v13)	
Ethiopian (Acts 8)	Believed (v37)		Confessed (v37)	Baptized (v38)	Rejoiced (v39)
Saul (Acts 9, 22)				Baptized (9:18)	Sins washed away (22:16)
Cornelius (Acts 10, 11)	Believed (10:43)	Repented (11:18)		Baptized (10:48)	Accepted by God (10:35)
Lydia (Acts 16)				Baptized (v15)	Was judged to be faithful (v15)
Jailer (Acts 16)	Believed (v31, 34)			Baptized (v33)	Rejoiced (v34)
Corinthians (Acts 18)	Believed (v8)			Baptized (v8)	Baptized into the body of the saved (1 Cor. 12:13)
Ephesians (Acts 19)	Believed (v4)	Repented (v4)		Baptized (v5)	Sanctified and cleansed (Eph. 5:26)
One must hear the Word of God (Romans 10:17)	One must believe in Christ (John 8:24)	One must repent of sins (Acts 17:30)	One must confess Christ (Matthew 10:32)	One must be baptized into Christ (Galatians 3:27)	In order to be saved (Hebrews 5:9)
The Great Commission	<i>"...make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them..."</i> (Matthew 28:19 ASV) <i>"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..."</i> (Mark 16:16)				

Do you see a pattern in this chart regarding baptism? Today millions of people are being told that they do not have to be baptized to be saved. They are told that they can merely pray "the sinner's prayer." The book of Acts has been rightfully called the "book of conversions," yet we do not read of any conversions to Christ which involved a command to pray! As a matter of fact, nowhere in the Bible do we read of any alien sinner living under the New Testament who was commanded to pray for salvation!

Many preachers cite First John 1:9 as the sinner's prayer: *"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."* However, they ignore the fact that these words were not written to alien sinners, but to Christians! Notice what John goes on to write: *"I write unto you, little children, because your sins are forgiven you for his name's sake"* (1 John 2:12). Prayer is the avenue of forgiveness for Christians (those who have already been Scripturally baptized). An example of this is found in Acts 8. When Simon the sorcerer sinned after baptism, as a child of God he was told to pray (Acts 8:22-24). He was not told to pray first, and then be baptized! (cf. Acts 8:12-13).

Please notice the following Scriptures, which teach that prayer is a blessing for those God calls "righteous":

"The Lord is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous" (Proverbs 15:29).

"He that turneth away his ear from hearing the law, even his prayer shall be abomination" (Proverbs 28:9).

"Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear: But your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid his face from you, that he will not hear" (Isaiah 59:1-2).

"Now we know that God heareth not sinners: but if any man be a worshipper of God, and doeth his will, him he heareth" (John 9:31; stated by an uninspired man, but obviously based on Old Testament teachings like those above).

"For the eyes of the Lord are over the righteous, and his ears are open unto their prayers: but the face of the Lord is against them that do evil" (1 Peter 3:12).

Prayer is a spiritual blessing, and *"all spiritual blessings"* are for those *"in Christ"*: *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ"* (Ephesians 1:3). One enters *"into Christ"* when he becomes a child of God by being *"baptized into Christ"*: *"For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus. For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ"* (Galatians 3:26-27; cf. Romans 6:3-4; John 3:5).

Once we have become God's children through baptism, the sins that separated us from God have been washed away (Acts 22:16). Therefore we can boldly approach God's throne saying, *"Our Father, which art in Heaven, hallowed be thy name..."* (Eph. 3:12-14; Hebrews 4:16; Matthew 6:9). However, no person has ever become a child of God by praying a prayer.