

Text: Romans 6: 3-11

Title: Importance of Baptism

Date: 8-24-08

Place: Sovereign Grace Baptist Church, Princeton, New Jersey

A week ago on Thursday night we saw how Cornelius and his household confessed the Lord in baptism. Last Sunday in our Bible Class we studied the account of Moses and the Israelites crossing the Red Sea. This past Thursday night we heard the apostle Peter rehearse the account of Cornelius and his household confessing Christ in water baptism. Suffice it to say, the doctrine of baptism has been on my mind for several weeks now. So this morning my subject is baptism.

Do you ever give much thought to believer's Baptism? When the Lord Jesus Christ was here he walked from Nazareth of Galilee all the way to Jerusalem to be baptized by John? Baptism must be important. Why did he do that? I know one reason he did it. He knew it was his Father's will that John baptize him. I'll give you another reason? As the Son of Man he believed God.

Proposition: I want you to see the importance of baptism for the believer.

I. WHAT IS BAPTISM; II. WHO SHOULD BE BAPTIZED; III. SHOULD I BE REBAPTIZED?

I. WHAT IS BAPTISM? (this is not in any particular order of importance but let me give you 4 things that baptism is.)

A. First, by definition baptism is "immersion" in water.

1. The very word "baptizo" means "immersion."
2. To say, "Immersion is a form of baptism would be as redundant as saying sprinkling is a form of sprinkling."
3. Immersion is not a mode of baptism; baptism is immersion.

Matthew 3: 16: And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway out of the water:

Remember Philip and the Ethiopian--**Acts 8:38: And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him. 39: And when they were come up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught away Philip, that the eunuch saw him no more: and he went on his way rejoicing.**

B. Secondly, Baptism is the believer's confession of faith in Christ

1. By being immersed in water then raised up out of the water, you symbolize how God saved you through the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ as your Substitute.

Romans 6:3: Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death?

When you were baptized in water, that immersion symbolized what literally took place for you when Christ died. Christ was made sin for you. Therefore justice demanded his life instead of yours. Therefore he died in your place. He was buried in your grave. And when he rose from the grave you were raised in him. That is what we confess in water baptism.

V4: Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

- Christ was raised to newness of life--perfectly holy in his person and perfectly righteous with no need for a carnal law to curb you and put bounds on you
- Sinners have to be hog-tied from hurting themselves and everyone around them and it still does no good
- In water-baptism you confessed that in spirit, the Spirit raised you to newness of life.
- In his holy person you are holy.
- In his righteousness you are righteous.
- In this new spirit you walk in him, led by the Holy Spirit of God.
- This new spirit can not NOT believe God.
- By faith in Christ who loved his Father and his neighbor perfectly you are just as perfect as he.

V5: For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also *in the likeness of his* resurrection: 6: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with *him*, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. 7: For he that is dead is freed from sin. . 8: Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with him: 9: Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over him. (death's sting is sin, the strength of sin is the law--he put away sin, satisfied the law) 10: For in that he died, he died unto sin once: but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God. 11: Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Galatians 3:27: For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.

2 Corinthians 5: 17: Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

A. Baptism is immersion in water.

B. Baptism is the believer's confession of faith in Christ.

C. Thirdly, baptism is the believer's public *consecration* to the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Through baptism you publicly confess that you commit yourself to Christ as your Lord who has dominion over you in heart and spirit, who leads you, whom you delight to follow, and his people are your people.

Last week we saw Hebrews 11: 29: By faith they passed through the Red sea as by dry *land*: which the Egyptians assaying to do were drowned.

Turn over to:

I Corinthians 10: 1: Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud and all passed through the sea

- When Israel entered the sea the cloud was over them and the walls of water were higher than their heads, and they all passed through the sea--they entered the water and came out of the water

V2: And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

- Moses held forth his rod and that sea parted, Moses entered the sea first, just as Christ entered death, passed through the grave, and out in resurrection, so Moses passed through the Red Sea.
- When the children of Israel followed him, they were baptized unto Moses in the Red Sea, in other words, Israel utterly **committed** to Moses; and our baptism is our publicly avowed commitment to Christ.
- They went after being delivered from bondage came out of that Red Sea committed to Moses, as one nation...**“the church in the wilderness”**
- **all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.** Egypt was drowned, didn't join in with them. The LORD separated Israel from Egypt; and baptism symbolically separates believers from unbelievers, truth from error and true religion from false religion as we follow Christ under his LORDSHIP.

D. Fourthly, baptism is answer of a good conscience toward God.

I Peter 3: 18: For Christ also hath once suffered for sins, the just for the unjust, that he might bring us to God, being put to death in the flesh, but quickened by the Spirit: now skip down to end of) v20:...the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. (Noah was in the Ark when it was submersed in the rain--the rain was God's wrath poured out on all sinful flesh--it was poured out on Noah but Noah was in the Ark.) V21: The like figure whereunto *even* baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ: 22: Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

1. Has Christ's blood purged your conscience?
2. Are you reconciled to God in the court of your conscience?
3. Are you at peace with God?

II. Who Should Be Baptized?

A. Only those who, by faith, believe Christ Jesus to be the Son of God.

1. That is, he's all your righteousness, all your holiness,
2. The One who bought you with his own blood; you're his personal, purchased possession
3. He's your Wisdom, and all your acceptance with God is in him.

The Ethiopian eunuch to whom Philip preached Christ.

Acts 8: 36: And as they went on *their* way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, *here is* water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? 37: And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38: And he commanded the chariot to stand still: and they went down both into the water, both Philip and the eunuch; and he baptized him.

Those who were given faith on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 2: 37: Now when they heard *this*, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men *and* brethren, what shall we do? 38: Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

Mark 16: 15: And he said unto them, Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature. 16: He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned.

4. Baptism never saved anyone. Sinner's are saved by grace.
5. Obedience to Christ is the fruit of God's grace. Baptism is obedience to God the Father, God the Son and God the Holy Spirit.
6. If the thought of being baptized grieves you, then you have not yet been saved.
7. But those in whom the Spirit has revealed Christ find that the Lord's commands are not grievous, but we delight to do his will.

Illustration: The Lord said, Matthew 11: 30:...*my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.*

- Baptism is the first public act of obedience whereby we follow him--But his yoke is easy, and his burden light for us.
- He took your sin to be his own. He only commands you to confess he did it--His yoke is easy.
- He went to the cross and bore the shame and the chastisement--all the hell that sinful man could injure him with and all the eternal wrath that holy judgment could pour out upon him until he paid the wages of sin, gave up the ghost and was buried--He doesn't command you to do that only to be immersed in a watery grave confessing that you were in him when he did that in your place--See how his burden is light.
- He was raised from that grave to sit at God's right hand. He doesn't command you to try to raise yourself from the pit of your grave. He only commands that you come up out of that watery grave, confessing that when he rose from the dead you rose him--See how light his yoke is for you.

See from his head, his hands his feet
Sorrow and love flow mingled down
Did e'er such love and sorrow meet
Or thorns compose so rich a crown?

III. LAST QUESTION, Should A Believe Ever Be Baptized Again?

A. If you were baptized then later God gave you faith to behold the all-sufficient Lord and Christ then the answer is yes.

1. The reason being, if you did not know the true Christ and believe on him when you were baptized the first time then all you really did was go for a swim.
2. You weren't really baptized.
3. Believing another Jesus all you did was make a false profession.
4. If God had drawn you to THE Christ and Christ has made himself Lord unto you, then you need to be baptized and confess Christ, for the first time.

Illustrations: Before man-made baptisteries came along, believers were baptized in the nearest creeks, rivers, and ponds--same creek where you'd go fishing.

- You hear of folks who get under legal conviction think being rebaptized will sooth their conscience
- They get all worked up at some revival meeting decide to rededicate their lives in baptism.
- Every time they feel guilty their baptized again and again.

The old saying used to be: "A sinner can be baptized so many times the fish know his social security number but without faith in Christ it'll do you know good!"

B. Once you have been baptized in the name of the true and living, sovereign triune God of heaven and earth then the answer is no.

1. There is no reason for you to ever be baptized again.

Conclusion:

The reason God's messengers are not sent to coerce sinners to be baptized and the reason we do not have to do that is this.

- Baptism is commanded by the Lord Jesus Christ, it would be sin for the believer not to obey him.
- And sin shall not have dominion over you who are under grace because...**God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work** (2Corinthians 9: 8.) Our God is **able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us** (Eph 3: 20.)
- So when God, by his power, cleanses your conscience with Christ's blood, when God is willing for you to glorify his Son in believer's baptism, by his power working in you it will be your chief desire to do the same.

Illustration: Jaime did anybody have to twist your arm to get you to propose to Sharon. I'll bet nobody had to twists Nathan's arm either.

When Christ becomes All to us we want the world to know that "I am his and he is mine."

