

“The Ordeal of Baptism and Its Results”

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Sermon Text: Romans 6:1-14

Today we will focus on the coordination between baptism and death.

Next week we will focus on the implications.

Baptism is perhaps the least understood rite among Christians. Some understand it as a saving ritual in which forgiveness is bestowed by God automatically. Others make it into nothing more than a dramatic opportunity for a believer to publically profess faith. Paul’s teaching is much deeper than either of these. He sees baptism as a flood ordeal!

Dr. Meredith Kline produced a two-part paper entitled “Oath and Ordeal Signs” published in the *Westminster Theological Journal* 27 (1964/65).

2 Peter 2:5–9 Water

2 Peter 3:9–13 Fire

1 Peter 3:21 referring to Noah’s flood

In his paper, Kline understands both the flood in Noah’s time and Red Sea crossing as water ordeals.

Kline sees John’s ministry of baptism at the Jordan as another trial by water ordeal.

Kline relates the water ordeals of the Noahic deluge, the Red Sea crossing, and John’s baptism ministry to Christian water baptism.

Why was Jesus baptized?

By his baptism Jesus was consecrating himself unto his sacrificial death in the judicial ordeal of the Cross.

[1] What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? [2] By no means! How can we who died to sin (through the ordeal of Christ on the cross) still live in it? [3] Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized (through water ordeal) into his death? [4] We were buried therefore with him by baptism (water ordeal) into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life. (ESV) [5] For if we have been united with him in a death (ordeal) like his, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection (vindication) like his. [6] We know that our old self was crucified with him (in the death ordeal) in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. [7] For one who has died (in the death ordeal) has been set free from sin. [8] Now if we have died with Christ (in his death ordeal on the cross), we believe that we will also live with him (having been vindicated in union with him). [9] We know that Christ, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over him. (the ordeal is passed) [10] For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives (vindicated in the resurrection) he lives to God. [11] So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin (since in union with Christ you have already come through the judgment ordeal) and alive to God in Christ Jesus (in whom you have already been vindicated).