

WHY DO WE BAPTIZE?

Text: Romans 6.1 – 11 (p. 1116 in pew Bible & p. 1737 in large print Bible).

Intro:

-illust. Sacrament Of Water Baptism

-recount baptismal services in *Beaubier & Red Lake & Jordan River*.

- this is a special time in the lives of God's people.

-part 6 of "Why Do We ...? Series, which was began in 2009:

- Why Do We Sing?
- Why Do We Trust God?
- Why Do We Trust The Bible?
- Why Do We Give To The Church?
- Why Do We Make Christ Known?

-in the A.N.E.:

- Egyptians practiced ritual water baptism for purifying the dead.
- Judaism practiced a rite of baptism for initiation of converts.
- Qumran community daily had purifying rites of water baptism.

-John the Baptist baptized many in Israel by immersion in the Jordan River.

- made Israel aware of the need for repentance and of the coming kingdom of God.
- an expression of repentance.
- contained special moral obligations, according to Luke 3.10:
 - sharing of coats & food by the well-to-do.
 - fair tax collection by tax collectors.
 - proper law enforcement by soldiers.

-today's text features Paul's teaching of how *baptism is a symbol of our identification with Christ*.

- we identify with Christ's death (v. 3).
- we identify with Christ's burial (v. 4).
- we identify with Christ's resurrection (v. 4).

-result of this identification is that we walk in newness of life and *serve in the newness of the Spirit* (chs. 6.4; 7.6).

Take Home Point:

-our obedience and identification with Christ must be on-going and daily.

MANDATE FOR BAPTIZING

-Jesus asked John the Baptist to baptize Him (Matthew 3.13 -15).

- “to fulfill righteous” = accredits this righteousness to us.
- to act as a representative of those who were repenting.
- directed his disciples to baptize others (John 4.1, 2).

-in Great Commission, Jesus commanded his disciples to teach and baptize all peoples (Matthew 28.19, 20; Mark 16.16).

- book of Acts records how the apostles taught and practiced this command to baptize all people.
 - Philip w. Ethiopian treasurer (ch. 8.35 – 39).
 - Peter & household of Cornelius (ch. 10.44 – 48).
 - Philippian jailer + family (ch. 16.31 – 33).

-all followers of Jesus are obliged by Him to be baptized in water.

- Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2.38).

MODE FOR BAPTIZING

-followers of Jesus were “buried” in the water and brought up again as a picture of death, burial, and resurrection.

- it is an outward symbol of an inward experience.
- immersion in water does not put us into Christ for that was accomplished by the Spirit when they believed (1 Corinthians 12.13).

-historians agree that the mode of baptism in the early church was immersion (*History of the Christian Church*, Oxford: University Press 1873 p.p. 117, 524, 446).

- for at least first 4 centuries except in cases of serious illnesses.
 - Eastern Church still rigidly adheres to baptism by immersion.
- by the time of the Reformation, John Calvin counseled latitude in mode (sprinkling, pouring, immersion, format), stressing rather its meaning and the particulars of diversity of climates.
 - yet he did note that the term “baptism” means to immerse and that the Early Church followed no other mode.
- Luther and Zwingli were sympathetic towards infant baptism based on the Jewish practice of circumcising infants.
 - however the rest of the Protestant church favours infant dedication, minus water baptism.

-term *BAPTIZO* = to dip.

- Greeks used this term to signify the dyeing of a garment or the drawing of water by dipping a vessel into another.
- Philip w. Ethiopian treasurer (ch. 8.35 – 39), *went down into the water and he baptized him and then came up out of the water*.

-review of L.A.C.C.'s practice of mode & baptism for infants / children / adults.

MEANING OF BAPTIZING

-it is an ordinance (prescribed practice & visible sign) not a sacrament (means of grace).

- idea of sacraments was introduced into the Western Church in the late 12th century A.D.
- salvation is by grace, through faith, apart from ritual and works.
 - water baptism does not wash away sin.
 - is a command obeyed by a clear conscience.
 - And that water is a picture of baptism, which now saves you, not by removing dirt from your body, but as a response to God from a clean conscience. It is effective because of the resurrection of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 3.21).

-today's text features Paul's teaching of how baptism is a symbol of our identification with Christ.

- we identify with Christ's death (v. 3).
 - penalty for our sins is fully paid!
 - deliverance from God's wrath and judgment!
- we identify with Christ's burial (v. v. 4, 6, 7).
 - freedom from the tyranny of our old self & sin.
- we identify with Christ's resurrection (v. v. 4, 5, 8, 9).

-result of this identification is that we walk in newness of life and serve in the newness of the Spirit (chs. 6.4, 10; 7.6).

-obedience = loyalty and love to our Saviour and his people.

- parallels circumcision in O.T. = *sign of being in covenant*.

Conclusion:

1. Know what God wants.

-all followers of Jesus need to be baptized in water.

- an act of publically identifying with Jesus.
- result of this identification is that we walk in newness of life and *serve in the newness of the Spirit* (chs. 6.4; 7.6).

-our obedience and identification with Christ *must be on-going and daily*.

- Thomas A Kempis – *The Imitation Of Christ*

2. Know how to do what God wants.

- respond to God from a clean conscience (1 Peter 3.21).

- personal affirmation and commitment to what God has done for you.
- public affirmation and witness to what God has done for you.

-source of great encouragement to God's family.

- angels in heaven.
- L.A.C.C. Church Family and other witnesses.

-contact me to make arrangements.

- source of God's blessing and smile.
- join others in this milestone of Christian witness.

Perfect submission – all is at rest, I and my Saviour am happy and blest;
Watching and waiting, looking above, Filled with His goodness, lost in His love.

3. Know that you will do it.

-**Final Hymn:** # 345 Blessed Assurance (all verses).

BENEDICTION

Go in peace, love and care for one another in the name of Christ

- and may the waters of your baptism enliven you,
- may the faith of your baptism strengthen you,
- and the community of the baptized support you,

through the One who calls you by name and redeems you,
the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
both now and forevermore. Amen

Sacrament Of Water Baptism

Sacraments, therefore, are exercises which root our faith deeply in the Word of God; and because we are physical beings, the sacrament of water baptism is exhibited under a physical object, so that it will train us as a teacher leads children by the hand (based on John Calvin's *Institutes of the Christian Religion* / cited in Craig Brian Larson & Brian Lowery. *1001 Quotations That Connect*. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2009, p. 167).

Thomas A Kempis

Every day renew your dedication to God, arousing fervent devotion in your heart as if it were the first day of your turning back to God. Pray to Him, saying: "Help me, Lord Jesus, to persevere in my good resolutions and in your Holy service till death. Help me to begin this day, well, for up to now I have done nothing" (Thomas A Kempis *The Imitation Of Christ Book 1: Useful Admonitions For The Spiritual Life*. New York: Catholic Book Publishing Corp., 1993, p. 42).