

Cornerstone 1: Repent and Return

C1-5 Water Baptism

Introduction

Jesus commanded us to do only two “ceremonial” expressions of our faith and the Kingdom of God: 1. Water baptism and 2. Holy Communion.

- Water baptism is to be done _____ while for Holy Communion, Jesus exhorted us to _____.
- Water baptism is important as it is not just an act of physically getting into and out of the water. Beyond what people can see in the physical, there is something very powerful in the spiritual. The act itself is a powerful expression of faith.

A. Seven Important Truths about Water Baptism

1 Corinthians 10:1 Moreover, brethren, I do not want you to be unaware that all our fathers were under the cloud, all passed through the sea, 2 all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

- God used the nation of Israel to illustrate what baptism means. When God sent Moses to bring Israel out of bondage from Egypt, God demonstrated His power against the gods of Egypt and finally pharaoh let them go. The Passover was initiated. Then came the crossing of the Red Sea.
- Moses represented God as a deliverer and as Paul described, they were baptized into Moses (baptized into their deliverer).
- What did Jesus come to do for us? _____
- What is crossing the Red Sea a picture of? _____
- When they crossed the Jordan and entered the Promised Land, it was their entry into the Kingdom. They were not supposed to spend 40 years in the wilderness. They did because they disobeyed the Lord.
- Israel’s experience illustrates what it means to be water baptized (we are baptized into our Deliverer) – a very powerful picture of the deliverance from all bondage and powers. The people of Israel were no longer subject to the gods of Egypt because these gods were all defeated.

1. Jesus exemplified and endorsed water baptism

Matthew 3:13 Then Jesus came from Galilee to John at the Jordan to be baptized by him. 14 And John tried to prevent Him, saying, I need to be baptized by You, and are You coming to me? 15 But Jesus answered and said to him, Permit it to be so now, for thus it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness. Then he allowed Him.

- Why did Jesus have to be baptized? _____
- Something powerful happens at our water baptism.

Matthew 3:16 When He had been baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened to Him, and He saw the Spirit of God descending like a dove and alighting upon Him. 17 And suddenly a voice came from heaven, saying, This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.

- We can expect the affirmation of the Father about our obedience to the Lordship of Christ.

We are not above our Master

If Jesus can humble Himself to fulfill all righteousness, all His disciples need to follow in His footsteps. His action also emphasized the importance of this sacrament.

- It is the first public _____. There is no secret Christian! He will acknowledge us to the world.
 - Not only do we believe in our heart and confess with our mouth, we go through water baptism. Why?
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2. We unite with Christ in His death and resurrection through water baptism

Romans 6:3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?

- Without dying there is no resurrection. We must die to self and then the resurrection power of Jesus will be upon us.

Water baptism – Picture of our burial

Romans 6:4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. 5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection.

- We identify with Him in burial in water baptism. We also identify with Him in resurrection power.

Without burial, no resurrection

Colossians 2:12 buried with Him in baptism, in which you also were raised with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

- While we go through the physical act, what happens in the spiritual realm? _____

- We live according to His will – dead to ourselves and our ambitions and agendas.

Dying is a Powerful Act!

When we go down into the waters during water baptism, it is a prophetic symbol of being baptized into His death. We unite ourselves with _____.

John 12: 24 Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone: but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit.

- Fruitfulness can only come because we die to ourselves.

We must reckon our sinful nature dead and buried

- The old person – the sinful nature in us died with Christ and is buried.
- When we rise from the waters of baptism, it is a powerful prophetic picture of our uniting with Christ in His resurrection.

3. We unite with Jesus' body through water baptism

Ephesians 4: 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

- Regardless of where we come from, when we enter the Kingdom of God, we are baptized into one body. We are part of the body of Jesus. He is the head. Paul described Jesus as the head and we are His body – one Lord, one faith, one baptism – that is a very invisible thing that had happened to us.

Publicly identifying and uniting with Him

Water baptism confirms our uniting with the One Lord, Jesus Christ in both our salvation and our calling.

- What is our hope tied to? _____

United in death, resurrection and hope

Through Him, we share one hope in our God and Father who will ultimately save us when Jesus returns and establishes His Kingdom on earth.

- We are not appointed unto the wrath of God (*1 Thessalonians 5:8-9*).
- God wants us to obtain salvation when He comes.
- While we received salvation when we confessed Jesus and believe in our heart, it is the **journey of walking in the Kingdom**. We are **first saved and then we are being saved**.
- Paul said to work out your salvation with fear and trembling.
- As we walk on the path of salvation, when Jesus comes we are finally saved.
- What does it mean to be first saved, being saved and ultimately saved? _____

- Saved, being saved and ultimately saved so that we can _____.
- To reign, we must build our spiritual life on a firm foundation so that when the storms come, we can stand firm.

The unnecessary question

Is water baptism necessary for salvation?

- Generally, it is a pattern – water baptism comes after our confession of faith.
- Technically, when Jesus was crucified on the cross, there was a thief who repented and Jesus said to him, yes, I will see you in paradise today. He was not baptized because he could not as he was hung on the cross.
- For all intents and purposes, baptism must _____. However, from a technical perspective we are saved from the example of the thief crucified next to Jesus.
- We must understand the Journey of our faith. While water baptism is a very important sacrament of the church, we do not believe it is necessary for salvation. However, those who are truly saved would want to be baptized for the reasons given in this lesson.

Saved, are being saved and ultimately saved

We are saved by grace through faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ (*Ephesians 2:8-9*).

- What do we rest on? _____ But we must _____
- We rest our faith and our salvation on _____.
- Some say we must continue to do to finish our work of salvation. NO, the work for our salvation is finished when Christ was crucified on the cross. When He was about to give up His Spirit, He said,

“It is finished!” He finished the work of salvation for every human being. So, we rest our faith, joy and hope in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

4. Baptism should follow quickly after salvation

Acts 8:26 Now an angel of the Lord spoke to Philip, saying, Arise and go toward the south along the road which goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza. This is [e]desert. 27 So he arose and went. And behold, a man of Ethiopia, a eunuch of great authority under Candace the queen of the Ethiopians, who had charge of all her treasury, and had come to Jerusalem to worship.

Expect the Supernatural when you are on Kingdom Assignment

Acts 8:28 was returning. And sitting in his chariot, he was reading Isaiah the prophet. 29 Then the Spirit said to Philip, Go near and overtake this chariot. 30 So Philip ran to him, and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah, and said, Do you understand what you are reading? 31 And he said, How can I, unless someone guides me? And he asked Philip to come up and sit with him.

- The Old Testament was not fulfilled yet until Jesus came. Jesus fulfilled everything prophesied in the Old Testament. Philip explained to him the means of salvation. Finally the eunuch understood everything.

The eunuch understood something powerful

Acts 8: 35 Then Philip opened his mouth, and beginning at this Scripture, preached Jesus to him. 36 Now as they went down the road, they came to some water. And the eunuch said, See, here is water. What hinders me from being baptized?

- What did the eunuch do after he had understood what Philip had declared to him? _____
- There was no need to ask the unnecessary question: Must I be baptized to be saved?
- It is like someone asking how much can I sin before I lose my salvation – another unnecessary question. The question is not how much you can sin BUT how much you should follow Jesus and walk closely with Him.
- The eunuch understood something very powerful, that upon his confession and belief in his heart, he wanted to be baptized.

Believe and confess Jesus as Son of God

Acts 8:37 Then Philip said, If you believe with all your heart, you may. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. 38 So he commanded the chariot to stand still. And both Philip and the eunuch went down into the water, and he baptized him.

The prophetic sign of the end times

Acts 8:39 Now when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord caught Philip away, so that the eunuch saw him no more; and he went on his way rejoicing. 40 But Philip was found at Azotus. And passing through, he preached in all the cities till he came to Caesarea.

- What is the prophetic sign of the end times? _____

Repentance and baptism (One package)

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 For the promise is to you and to your children, and to all who are afar off, as many as the Lord our God will call.

- Repent and be baptized – It is ONE full package.

Biblical modus operandi

Acts 2:40 And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, Be saved from this perverse generation 41 Then those who gladly received his word were baptized; and that day about three thousand souls were added to them.

- What is the Biblical mode of operation? _____

Prophetic act of sins washed away

Acts 22:16 And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and wash away your sins, calling on the name of the Lord.

- This is a very interesting additional piece of the picture – when we are repenting and repented, and believed Jesus and are baptized, it is a picture of _____.
- When we go down to the waters of baptism, there is a cleansing away of all our sins.

Powerful Kingdom principle

1 Corinthians 15:46 However, the spiritual is not first, but the natural, and afterward the spiritual. 47 The first man was of the earth, made of dust; the second Man is the Lord from heaven.

- The Kingdom principle of God is _____
- In the same way when we go through the waters of baptism, it is a natural act.
- When you go through the natural act, a spiritual power, a spiritual cleansing, a spiritual supernatural act took place in your life. This is the principle of God.

Some key points

- We have been commissioned to _____.
- Water baptism should _____.
- The apostle Peter emphasized the obedient action of _____
_____ – This is a very important cornerstone of our foundation and faith.

5. External proclamation of being united with Christ

1 Corinthians 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free; and have all been made to drink into one Spirit. 14 For in fact the body is not one member but many.

- We are united with Christ in His body for in fact the body is not one member but many members /citizens of the Kingdom of God.
- What are we proclaiming to the world? _____
- We have moved from sinship to sonship.

From sinship to sonship

Galatians 3:26 For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus. 27 For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.

- We have now been rescued from a titanic sinship which is about to crash and disaster awaits us for eternity.
- God has transferred us from the titanic sinship to His sonship – we have become sons and where are we headed? _____
- Rejoice even as you are being water baptized.

Regeneration and Renewing

Titus 3:5 Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy He saved us, through the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit.

- Water baptism is our external proclamation of the internal regeneration work of the Holy Spirit.

Something powerful in the spiritual realm

In the Asian culture, most parents do not view the seriousness of our decision to follow Christ until we tell them that we are going to be water baptized. Somehow, they understand the seriousness of water baptism. In their hearts, they perceive that with water baptism, we now really belong to God.

A very powerful witness

Therefore, water baptism becomes a very important _____

6. Commandment from the Lord Jesus Christ

Matthew 28:19 Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age. Amen.

- What is the commandment from the Lord? _____
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7. Anticipation of the consummation of the Kingdom

Ephesians 4:30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

- What are we looking forward to? _____
- The day of redemption for us is being alive in these end times. Jesus will come and those who are dead shall rise first and then those who are alive shall be caught up with Him. We are sealed for this.
- What are we announcing through water baptism? _____
- It is a clean break from our past and now we belong to the Lord and when He comes back in the second coming, we will be caught up with Him.

Repentance, water baptism and the Kingdom of God

Matt 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.

- How do we enter the Kingdom? _____

B. Who should be baptized?

Only those who:

- Believe in their hearts that Jesus Christ is Lord,
- Repent of their sins and acknowledge that the blood of Jesus Christ has cleansed them and
- Confess him with their mouths

should be baptized (Read *Acts 2:37, 38 and 41*).

- What happens when an unrepentant sinner enters the waters of baptism? What happens to him?

- Water baptism is the _____ of what has happened _____. Something inward must first take place.

C. Practical Implications of Water Baptism

There are five things to note:

1. Powerful act of being _____.
 - In water baptism, the believer is submerged completely under water and then immediately raised out of the water. It is a symbolic act of being buried after we have declared that we are dead to the old life. When we get out of the water, we will be deemed as being resurrected unto new life.
 2. Integral part of _____ and _____.
 - It shows that the believer is now an integral part of Jesus Christ who suffered for the sins of the world and died on the cross.
 3. Statement of _____.
 - During our water baptism, we openly testify to others that we were in Christ when Christ was judged for sin. We were buried with Him and we are now risen to new life in Him.
 4. Personal testimony of _____.
 - Water baptism is our way of telling everybody that we have come into a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.
 5. Expression of _____.
 - Water baptism helps us to express more tangibly what has happened inside us and that we are making a commitment to outwardly follow Jesus as our Lord and Savior.
- Water baptism is our announcement that we are in the best relationship – we are in a relationship with Jesus Christ our Lord, Savior and Friend.

Note: All believers should be taught that they are not saved by water baptism but Christ and Christ alone.

D. What is the Appropriate Way to be Baptized in Water?

Immersion is the prescribed way. Sprinkling or pouring for elderly people or new believers who are bed-ridden because of sickness is only an alternative.

- The prescribed way is immersion because the word 'baptize' comes from the Greek word 'baptizein' and the accurate meaning in English is _____
- In both secular and religious Greek literature, the common meaning of this word was used to describe objects being immersed in liquid (Read *Mark 1:9-11* and *Acts 8:36-39*).

- To baptize is to immerse the whole object. It is like dyeing a piece of cloth. You need to immerse or baptize that entire piece of cloth into the whole pool of the chosen color dye. Everything must go into it. That is the meaning of baptism.
 - The spiritual meaning is powerful. What is the spiritual meaning? _____
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Prophetic pictures of water baptism

- The immersion is a burial. Our old life must be _____.
- What comes up is _____.

How should a new believer be baptized?

Matthew 28:19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.

- A new believer should be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit in Jesus' mighty Name.

Conclusion

Water baptism is a point of separation – the old is gone and the new is here. This clear distinction should create the deepest impression in the heart and soul of every new believer.

- We are now approved and affirmed by God our Father.
- We are not just a slave but a son, a daughter.
- The Holy Spirit is given to us to walk fully in and fulfill all that God has destined for us.

Prayer: Father, I pray for everyone watching this teaching that the conviction of water baptism will be so strong that we want to be baptized ourselves and also, we want to reach out to many and see them baptized into the body of Jesus Christ, baptized so that their sins are cleansed totally through their obedient act and let them come and walk fully into the Kingdom. The Lord bless you richly. Amen.