

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

FEBRUARY 26TH - 27TH // BAPTISM WEEKEND

BAPTISM

A PUBLIC DISPLAY THAT WE'VE CHOSEN JESUS

We take on the "new man" or woman and are "brought to life." Similar to a marriage ceremony where we take on our "husband's" name (the wedding ring).

- The baptism is not salvation, but a response to and physical representation of being saved.

BAPTISM IDENTIFIES US AS CHRISTIANS

This is the most evident part of our adoption into the family of God, and it should be a **visible turning point in our lives**.

- One's heart should start to change into alignment with God when we accept Christ, but an even greater **change should come when we publicly commit to follow Jesus through baptism**.

THE EXAMPLE

JESUS CAME TO SHAKE THINGS UP

Jesus came to change the process in which our salvation came. Part of this was through baptism, something that had never been done before to represent salvation.

- Instead of "rolling sin away" temporarily, **belief, baptism, and repentance permanently erase past sins and open the door for restoration**.
- **Matthew 3:15-17**

JESUS HAD NOTHING TO REPENT FOR

Jesus didn't get baptized because He had to, He wanted to give an example of what the Father wants from us because He knew **obedience to the Father was vital**.

- We see here that **Jesus never asks us to do anything He hasn't already done first**. We also see that **baptism pleases our heavenly Father**.

ACTIVATION

A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS A PROCESS

As we move through the process of being set apart for God (sanctified), choices we make activate promises God has for us.

- When we **genuinely repent** and choose to **be baptized as a public profession of faith**, the **Holy Spirit will empower** us to live in a way that pleases God.
- **Acts 2:38-41**

LEARNING TO USE SPIRITUAL WEAPONS

After repentance and baptism, one should read 1 Corinthians 12-14 and start to pray that God uses these gifts in and through us.

- **These gifts are in place to help us advance God's Kingdom and to grow our relationship with Him. We need the Holy Spirit to guide us as we work through this life.**

JESUS INSTRUCTS US

SOMETIMES IT'S SIMPLY ABOUT OBEDIENCE

We're naturally rebellious because humanity is in a fallen state. As people that claim to follow Christ, **we need to trust and stop debating God and just start following His lead**.

- Though I cannot explain everything about baptism, I know **it is imperative to follow God's instruction**.
- **Matthew 28:19-20**
- **John 14:15**

WE'RE RESURRECTED

THE SYMBOLISM OF A FRESH START

Baptism symbolizes us dying to ourselves and being buried, but more importantly it identifies us with rising again!

- We'll have struggles, but from this moment we're labeled as new creations, **no longer slaves to our former selves! We're all born into some kind of struggle. This is why we must be born again**.
- **Romans 6:3-7**

THE SYMBOLISM OF A FRESH START

Becoming a Christian and choosing to get baptized doesn't mean we won't make mistakes. It does mean that **we are no longer slaves to sinful lifestyles**. This means **we can be delivered and permanently changed**.

- **The point of salvation is deliverance from destruction. Jesus gives us a fresh start.**

A NEW IDENTITY

BAPTISM ISN'T A MAGICAL FORMULA

The words spoken over someone getting baptized are not as important as **the genuineness of the person's heart** making the public profession.

- **How we pray for people getting baptized is important, but it's more so the understanding why this event is taking place and Whose identity they're adopting.**
- **Galatians 3:27-28**

ABOVE ALL THINGS, WE FIND OUR IDENTITY IN JESUS

Salvation only comes when we identify ourselves as followers of Jesus above all things, even gender, occupation, nationality, or skin color. That's why understanding our new identity in Christ is vitally important. **DO WE HAVE TO?**

- **1 Peter 3:21-22**

A LIFE "PLEGGED" TO GOD

Salvation is more than a one-time experience, it is a life-long relationship with Jesus. Though initial salvation may happen at conversion, baptism is one of the first steps in obedience to Jesus, and **without obedience to Jesus, we cannot be saved**.

- **Baptism shows the world our pledge to live a life that obeys and honors God.**

HOW SHOULD ONE RESPOND TO THE GOSPEL?

- **Belief:** Realizing that Jesus is the Savior.
- **Repentance:** Heartfelt sorrow for sin we've committed, a desire to change, and a denial of self in order to walk in obedience to Jesus.
- **Daily Faith:** Saving faith is personal trust in Jesus that is active everyday. It is complete surrender to Him.
- **Baptism:** The outward profession of the inward work of grace.

WE NEED TO CHECK OUR HEARTS

If one understands the weight of sin and the grace God has shown us through His forgiveness, they will start to approach God in humility and obedience.

- **When we start asking how little we must do to please the Lord, there is a much bigger heart issue that needs to be addressed.**

A BETTER QUESTION

- The questions with our relationship to God should never be centered around **"What do I HAVE to do?"**
- After we start to understand His sacrifice for us, we should respond with questions centered around **"What more CAN I do for Christ?"**

RESPONDING TO THE CROSS

- **Today we all have an opportunity to respond to what Jesus has done for us.**
- If you don't have a relationship with Christ, we can help you **start that journey**.
- If one has recently committed to Christ, they can make that public through **baptism**.
- If we already follow, we can remember the cross through taking **communion**.