

THIS WEEK'S MESSAGE

MAY 17TH–18TH, 2025 // BAPTISM WEEKEND

A PUBLIC DISPLAY THAT WE HAVE CHOSEN JESUS

We take on the “new man” or woman and are “brought to life.” It is similar to a marriage ceremony where we take on our “husband’s” name (the wedding ring).

- **The baptism is not salvation, but an obedient 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.**

- Our hearts should start to change 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 by 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 erase sin and open the door for restoration.**
- **Matthew 3:15–17 (CSB)**

JESUS HAD NOTHING TO REPENT FOR

Jesus did not get baptized because He had to; He wanted to give an example of what God wants from us because He knew **obedience to the Father was vital.**

- **Jesus never asks us to do anything He has not done first.** We also see that **baptism pleases our heavenly Father.**

AN ACTIVATION

A RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS A PROCESS

As we move through the process of being set apart for God (sanctified), the 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 (CSB)**

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 help us advance God’s Kingdom and grow our relationship with Him. We need the Holy Spirit to guide us as we work through this life.**

JESUS INSTRUCTS US

SOMETIMES IT IS SIMPLY ABOUT OBEDIENCE

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

- Though I cannot explain everything about baptism, I know **it is imperative to follow God’s instruction and example.**
- **Matthew 28:19–20 (CSB)**
- **John 14:15 (CSB)**

WE ARE RESURRECTED

THE SYMBOLISM OF A FRESH START

Baptism symbolizes our old self dying, but more importantly, it identifies us with rising again! We will have struggles, but from this moment, we are labeled as new creations.

- **We are no longer slaves to our former selves! We are all born into some kind of struggle, but in Christ we are born again.**
- **Romans 6:3–7 (CSB)**

THE SYMBOLISM OF A FRESH START

Becoming a Christian and responding in baptism does not mean we will not make mistakes. It does mean that **we are no longer slaves to sinful lifestyles.** This means **we can be delivered and changed.**

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

A NEW IDENTITY

BAPTISM IS NOT A MAGICAL FORMULA

The words spoken over someone are not as important as **the sincerity of the person’s heart** getting baptized.

- How we pray for people is important, but it is more about **the understanding of why baptism takes place and Whose identity they are adopting.**
- **Galatians 3:27–28 (CSB)**

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 is why understanding our new identity in Christ is vitally important.

DO WE HAVE TO?

- **1 Peter 3:21–22 (CSB)**

A LIFE “PLEDGED” TO GOD

Salvation is more than a one-time experience; it is a lifelong relationship. Though initial salvation happens at conversion, baptism is one of the first steps in obedience, 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 Jesus is the Savior. **Repentance:** Heartfelt sorrow for sin, desire to change, and denial of self in order to be obedient to Jesus. **Baptism:** Outward profession of inward work. **Daily faith:** Saving faith is personal trust in Jesus that is active every day. It is complete surrender to Him.

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 Jesus, there’s a much bigger heart issue that needs to be addressed.**

A BETTER QUESTION

- The questions about 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

- **We all have an opportunity to respond.**
- If you do not 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.**