

Understanding Baptism

- Jesus commissioned his disciples to “go and make disciples, baptizing them...” (Mt. 28:19)
- This means that baptism is not simply a biblical doctrine. It is a biblical mandate, given by Jesus Himself.

“New Testament evangelists did not invite people to consider if they would like to obey the Lord in the matter of baptism. They baptized them! When Cornelius and his companions were filled with the Holy Spirit, Peter ordered them to be baptized (Acts 10:48). Paul received similar treatment from Ananias (Acts 22:16). Those arguing that they are not quite sure whether they want to be baptized are clearly saying they are not quite sure whether to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord.”

-Terry Virgo, *Restoration In The Church*, p. 98

What Does Baptism Signify?

- Your baptism signifies something huge! Like a wedding ring, it makes a public statement of a reality that is bigger than the “ceremony” itself.

Union with Christ

Romans 6:1-5

- Remember the dilemma? Ever since the Fall in the garden, the human race has been infected by sin and separated from God.
- Enter the 2nd Representative, the 2nd Adam.
- But, how does Christ’s work on the cross get applied to my life? How do I get de-united from Adam and united to Christ? 1) Hear the gospel 2) Turn away from sin and turn in faith to Christ. The moment I, by the power of God’s grace, repent and believe, in that moment, my union with Adam is severed and I am joined to Christ. My baptism points to what that union involves: death to the old life and new life in Him.

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me.” (Gal. 2:20)

▶ Marriage Analogy

Regeneration/Cleansing from sin

Titus 3:4-5

- Baptism also signifies the fact that the believer has been washed clean from all sin.

Who Should Get Baptized?

- So, if baptism is primarily a sign that points to one's union with Christ – new life in Christ – who should get baptized?
 - A wedding ring doesn't magically change a single person into a married person. A baptism doesn't magically change anything either. It *points* to the fact that you *have* been changed: you've died, you've risen, you've been washed and cleansed from sin.
 - ▶ Mississippi Sign Committee
 - ▶ Brief Response to Roman Catholic View (baptismal regeneration)
 - Problem #1: There are no biblical accounts of infant baptisms.
 - Problem #2: The Catholic interpretation of baptism texts contradicts the gospel.

Biblical Examples

Jesus Ordains the Practice

"Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit." (**Matt 28:19**)

Believers at Pentecost

"Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said to them, "Repent, and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. ... So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and there were added that day about three thousand souls." (**Acts 2:37-38, 41**)

New Believers in Samaria

"But when they believed Philip preaching the good news about the kingdom of God and the name of Jesus Christ, they were being baptized, men and women alike." (**Acts 8:12**)

The Ethiopian Eunuch

"And as they went along the road they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look! Water! What prevents me from being baptized?" [And 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."] And he ordered the chariot to stop; and they both went down into the water, Philip as well as the eunuch; and he baptized him. And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; and the eunuch saw him no more, but went on his way rejoicing." (**Acts 8:36-39**)

The Apostle Paul's Baptism

"And immediately there fell from his eyes something like scales, and he regained his sight, and he arose and was baptized." (**Acts 9:18**)

The Household of Cornelius

"Then Peter answered, 'Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?' And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ." (**Acts 10:46-48**)

A Religious Leader and Other Corinthians

“And Crispus, the leader of the synagogue, believed in the Lord with all his household, and many of the Corinthians when they heard were believing and being baptized.” (**Acts 18:8**)

“The New Testament authors wrote as though they clearly assumed that everyone who was baptized had also personally trusted in Christ and experienced salvation.”

-Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 970

Expectations for Baptism

Anticipate God’s goodness

- You should expect this to be more than a simple act of obedience.

“Since Jesus commanded his church to baptize (Matt. 28:19), we would expect that there would be a measure of blessing connected with baptism, because all obedience to God by Christians brings God’s favor with it. This obedience is specifically a public act of confessing Jesus as Savior, an act which in itself brings joy and blessing to a believer. Moreover, it is a sign of the believer’s death and resurrection with Christ (see Rom. 6:2-5; Col. 2:12), and it seems fitting that the Holy Spirit would work through such a sign to increase our faith, to increase our experiential realization of death to the power and love of sin in our lives, and to increase our experience of the power of new resurrection life in Christ that we have as believers. Since baptism is a physical symbol of the death and resurrection of Christ and our participation in them, it should also give additional assurance of union with Christ to all believers who are present. Finally, since water baptism is an outward symbol of inward spiritual baptism by the Holy Spirit, we may expect that the Holy Spirit will ordinarily work alongside the baptism, giving to believers an increasing realization of the benefits of the spiritual baptism to which it points.”

-Wayne Grudem, *Systematic Theology*, p. 953-954

Some Quick Details

- Testimonies are due next Sunday at latest. If not turned in by then, you’ll need to get in on next baptism.
- If you didn’t hear last week’s message you’ll need to before being baptized.
- Kids high school age and under need to speak with Pastor Jeff.
- Baptism is on May 16.
- If you have any questions call me or email matt@lakeviewchristiancenter.com