

August 28, 2022 Sermon Notes James Gallaher. What is Baptism?

Baptism is a sign for those who have chosen to follow Jesus Christ. What is the Biblical doctrine of baptism? Why are we baptized? What is baptism as supported by God's Word? Baptism is when a person gets submerged in water in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. The Greek word, *Baptisma*, is used 77 times in the New Testament and every time it refers to a complete submersion in water. (Pastor James in this sermon covers some beliefs on baptism that are not supported by God's Word.) It is so important to build doctrine on God's Word and look to His Word for clarity.

The gospels give account of John baptizing people. What was John's baptism for? It was for repentance, a sign of the old covenant for confession of sins. It was different than Jesus' baptism that represents salvation for us that was paid for on the cross. God's Word tells us that Jesus came to his cousin, John, to be baptized. **Matthew 3:14-17** *But John tried to prevent Him, saying, "I have the need to be baptized by You, and yet You are coming to me? But Jesus, answering, said to him, "Allow it at this time; for in this way it is fitting for us to fulfill all righteousness." Then he allowed Him. After He was baptized, Jesus came up immediately from the water; and behold, the heavens were opened, and he saw the Spirit of God descending as a dove and settling on Him, and behold, a voice from the heavens said, "This is My beloved Son, with whom I am well pleased."*

Jesus connects baptism to the righteousness that He gave on the cross. Righteousness came through Jesus' death, burial, and resurrection. **Luke 12:50** *But I have a baptism to undergo, and how distressed I am until it is accomplished!* Jesus is alluding to His death on the cross - the death, burial, and resurrection that He was to undergo. Jesus view of death and resurrection was best described in baptism. Baptism accurately portrays what Christ has done and did for each of us. Baptism answers the question of "what happened" in our life - a response to a changed life that others can see.

Baptism is not tied to our salvation but gives testimony to what Christ has done. Baptism is not a part of salvation but in response to salvation. **Colossians 2:11-12** *and in Him you were also circumcised with a circumcision made without hands, in the removal of the body of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ; having been buried with Him in baptism, in which you were also raised up with Him through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead. In that day, circumcision was much more than a procedure - it was a mark on a child's life.*

We are saved by grace through faith only and baptism shows the world around us what happened. **2 Corinthians 5:17** *Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creature; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come.* **Galatians 3:27** *For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ.* We are baptized into Christ and are not baptized into a church or into a denomination. Baptism is for the believer. Baptism is a physical picture of a spiritual reality by which we reveal to the world what Christ has done for us.

Why be baptized? **Matthew 28:19-20** *Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit...* Why? Because Christ commanded it. We are to bring others to salvation, and then it is demonstrated with a willingness to be baptized. That's the great commission. It is what Jesus wants us to do... preach the gospel, make disciples, and baptize. If we are not being baptized then we are disobeying Jesus on a basic element. **Luke 6:46** *Why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?* Baptism is not about a personal experience as much as it is about your personal obedience. Baptism was always about obedience to Jesus Christ. **John 14:15** *If you love Me, you will keep My commandments.*

Peter had a remarkable change after salvation speaking with boldness and eloquence... **Acts 2:37-41** *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?" Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself." And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, "Be saved from this perverse generation!" So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.*

While baptism does not save us, it does illustrate a personal willingness to obey Christ. Therefore, if you are a believer and have not been baptized, you need to be baptized.

Mark 1:9-11 *In those days Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Immediately coming up out of the water, He saw the heavens opening, and the Spirit like a dove descending upon Him; and a voice came out of the heavens: "You are My beloved Son, in You I am well-pleased."* This suggests that when you come up out of the water there is an opening of the heavens over your life in a new way and the Spirit of God comes on you in a new way. There is a new grace that is poured out on us and the favor of God looks down on us with rejoicing in our obedience.

What was John's baptism for?

What is your understanding of baptism? the what? the why?

Have you followed Jesus in baptism?