

BAPTISM A ONE MAN PASSION PLAY

I. Various Scriptures

A. We've spent a good bit of the summer talking about regeneration: being born again, spiritual rebirth, conversion to Christ. When the Gospel is preached and the Holy Spirit quickens a heart to believe, a spiritually dead person is made spiritually alive in Christ. New creatures! And when a person truly does become a believer, something should soon follow--what is that? Baptism.

B. Let's revisit Jesus' Great Commission found in Matthew 28:18-20 (ESV) *18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. 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 behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."* (Baptism, as so clearly stated, is an integral part of Jesus' disciple-making charge.)

C. 1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NIV) reads: *1 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. 2 By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. 3 For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, 4 that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...* (John Piper writes: "The best news of the Christian gospel is that the supremely glorious Creator of the universe has acted in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection to remove every obstacle between us and Himself so that we may find everlasting joy in seeing and savoring His infinite beauty." (Baptism convey all this!)

D. When a person is baptized, the Gospel is being publicly depicted for everyone to see. It's my personal drama professing my faith in Jesus Christ. It's a one man passion play. As often put, *Baptism is an outward sign of an inward grace*.

E. Jesus said in Matthew 10:32-33 (ESV) *32 So everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven, 33 but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father who is in heaven. 1 John 4:13-15* (ESV) echoes: *13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. 14 And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. 15 Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. Romans 10:8-11* (ESV) says: *8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); 9 because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. 11 For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame."* (Baptism is meant to boldly proclaim and leave no doubt, in the eye of any beholder, that we are unashamed to name Jesus Christ as our Lord & Savior!)

F. Now we understand there are many theological perspectives on baptism...

1) First off, we acknowledge the ancient phrase: "In essentials unity, in nonessentials, liberty, in all things charity." (But without apology and without criticizing others, we stand by our Biblical convictions with regards to Baptism.)

2) We know this: Jesus was baptized; He commanded us to be baptized; the Apostles commanded and practiced baptism; and the Scriptures affirm it...

3) Christians debate how much water to use; the name formula; adults vs infants; whether it's reflective of or required for salvation. (e.g. *Dave Schilling's Baptism*)

G. Baptism is an outward expression of an inward transformational event.

1) We view this sacrament emblematically. (e.g. Marriage vows vs wedding rings...)

2) It dramatizes our salvation but it isn't our salvation. Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV): *8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- 9 not by works, so that no one can boast.* (e.g. Thief on the cross; new believer burned at the stake; a soldier dying on a battlefield; We believe one can only be saved by grace alone through faith alone, in Christ alone. We believe this even when Baptism has yet to happen or is not an option.

3) While Baptism is emblematic, it definitely is an act of obedience ordained by Jesus. Obedience has no opt-out clauses. (e.g. Believers on Pentecost; Gentile believers at Cornelius' house; the Ethiopian Eunuch; Lydia; the Philippian jailer.)

H. Here are some more pivotal Scriptures:

1) Romans 6:1-5 (NIV) *1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? 2 By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? 3 Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized (submerged) into His death? 4 We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. 5 If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection. (Baptism clearly communicates the death, burial, & resurrection of Jesus and my identification with Him in it...)*

2) Colossians 2:9-14 (NLT) *9 For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. 10 So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. 11 When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision--the cutting away of your sinful nature. 12 For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with Him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. 13 You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. 14 He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross. (2 Cor. 5:21) (Do you see how Baptism vividly portrays this?)*

I. Likewise we believe Baptism affirms the following:

1) That we belong to Christ and are new creatures in Him. 2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV) says: 17 *Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!*

2) That our faith and hope are in Jesus Christ's atoning death, burial, & resurrection. Baptism reflects the atoning work that Jesus has wrought for us, for me!

3) That our sins have been washed away. Acts 22:16 (NIV) says: 16 *And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name. (Our sins are washed away by the blood of Jesus; Baptism depicts this reality.)*

4) That we are members of the Body of Christ, God's family, His church. Michael Horton states it simply: "Baptism is not only a sacrament of our union with Christ; it is also a sacrament of our communion as the body of Christ." **Ephesians 4:4-6 (VOICE) reminds us: 4** *There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were all called to pursue one hope. 5 There is one Lord Jesus, one living faith, one ceremonial washing through baptism, and 6 one God--the Father over all who is above all, through all, and in all.*

J. The late Dr. M.R. DeHaan said the following about Baptism: "In the early days of the church..., baptism was a declaration that the believer was definitely identifying himself with that group of people who were called Christians and were despised and hated. To be a Christian meant something. To identify yourself with those who were called Christians meant persecution, maybe death; it meant being ostracized from your family, shunned by friends. And the one act which was the final declaration of this identification was BAPTISM. As long as a man gathered with Christians, he was tolerated, but when once he submitted to baptism, he declared to all the world, I BELONG TO THIS DESPISED GROUP, and immediately he was persecuted, hated, and despised. In baptism, therefore, the believer entered into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. A person might be a believer and keep it strictly a secret and thus avoid unpleasantness and suffering, but once he submitted to public baptism he had burned his bridges behind him."

*** In Baptism we burn our bridges and embrace Jesus Christ and the people called by His name. No turning back, no turning back...**

*** Close with Prayer...**

[Scriptures, Videos, & Bonus Stuff](#)

[Matthew 28:18-20 \(ESV\)](#)

18 And Jesus came and said to them, "All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Me. **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 behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age."

1 Corinthians 15:1-4 (NIV)

1 Now, brothers and sisters, I want to remind you of the gospel I preached to you, which you received and on which you have taken your stand. **2** By this gospel you are saved, if you hold firmly to the word I preached to you. Otherwise, you have believed in vain. **3** For what I received I passed on to you as of first importance: that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, **4** that He was buried, that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures...

Matthew 10:32-33 (ESV)

32 So everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father who is in heaven, **33** but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father who is in heaven.

1 John 4:13-15 (ESV)

13 By this we know that we abide in Him and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. **14** And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent His Son to be the Savior of the world. **15** Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God.

Romans 10:8-11 (ESV)

8 But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith that we proclaim); **9** because, if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. **10** For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. **11** For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in Him will not be put to shame."

Romans 6:1-5 (NIV)

1 What shall we say, then? Shall we go on sinning so that grace may increase? **2** By no means! We died to sin; how can we live in it any longer? **3** Or don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death? **4** We were therefore buried with Him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. **5** If we have been united with Him like this in His death, we will certainly also be united with Him in His resurrection.

Colossians 2:9-14 (NLT)

9 For in Christ lives all the fullness of God in a human body. **10** So you also are complete through your union with Christ, who is the head over every ruler and authority. **11** When you came to Christ, you were "circumcised," but not by a physical procedure. Christ performed a spiritual circumcision--the cutting away of your sinful nature. **12** For you were buried with Christ when you were baptized. And with Him you were raised to new life because you trusted the mighty power of God, who raised Christ from the dead. **13** You were dead because of your sins and because your sinful nature was not yet cut away. Then God made you alive with Christ, for He forgave all our sins. **14** He canceled the record of the charges against us and took it away by nailing it to the cross.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God-- **9** not by works, so that no one can boast.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (NIV)

17 Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come!

Acts 22:16 (NIV)

16 And now what are you waiting for? Get up, be baptized and wash your sins away, calling on His name.

Ephesians 4:4-6 (VOICE)

4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were all called to pursue one hope. **5** There is one Lord Jesus, one living faith, one ceremonial washing through baptism, and **6** one God—the Father over all who is above all, through all, and in all.

Quote by John Piper

"The best news of the Christian gospel is that the supremely glorious Creator of the universe has acted in Jesus Christ's death and resurrection to remove every obstacle between us and Himself so that we may find everlasting joy in seeing and savoring His infinite beauty."

Quote by Michael Horton

"Baptism is not only a sacrament of our union with Christ; it is also a sacrament of our communion as the body of Christ."

Dr. M.R. DeHaan on Baptism

"In the early days of the church..., baptism was a declaration that the believer was definitely identifying himself with that group of people who were called Christians and were despised and hated. To be a Christian meant something. To identify yourself with those who were called Christians meant persecution, maybe death; it meant being ostracized from your family, shunned by friends. And the one act which was the final declaration of this identification was BAPTISM. As long as a man gathered with Christians, he was tolerated, but when once he submitted to baptism, he declared to all the world, I BELONG TO THIS DESPISED GROUP, and immediately he was persecuted, hated, and despised. In baptism, therefore, the believer entered into the fellowship of the sufferings of Christ. A person might be a believer and keep it strictly a secret and thus avoid unpleasantness and suffering, but once he submitted to public baptism he had burned his bridges behind him."

- Martin Ralph DeHaan (March 23, 1891 - December 13, 1965) was an American Bible teacher who founded the [Radio Bible Class](#), and became co-editor of the monthly devotional, [Our Daily Bread](#). He was a medical doctor who became an ordained pastor and teacher. As a doctor of medicine, he delivered all four of his children and as a pastor he also officiated their marriages.

Film Clips & Article Links

Baptism and Regeneration - John Piper

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6NgtbMWzJ4c>

What is Baptism and How Important Is It? - John Piper (Full Sermon)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y_JwUBkZpiM

Baptism By Kenny Chesney & Randy Travis

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IW_oBGbvROg

Down To The River To Pray - Alison Krauss

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zSif77IVQdY>

Been Through The Waters by Kyle Matthews

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JJVLC7h-IJ0&feature=related>

Bonus Stuff

Luke 12:8-9 (ESV)

8 And I tell you, everyone who acknowledges Me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God, 9 but the one who denies Me before men will be denied before the angels of God.

1 John 2:23-25 (ESV)

23 No one who denies the Son has the Father. Whoever confesses the Son has the Father also. 24 Let what you heard from the beginning abide in you. If what you heard from the beginning abides in you, then you too will abide in the Son and in the Father. 25 And this is the promise that He made to us--eternal life.

2 Corinthians 5:17 (AMP)

17 Therefore if anyone is in Christ [that is, grafted in, joined to Him by faith in Him as Savior], he is a new creature [reborn and renewed by the Holy Spirit]; the old things [the previous moral and spiritual condition] have passed away. Behold, new things have come [because spiritual awakening brings a new life].

Ephesians 4:4-6 (MSG)

4 You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. 5 You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.

Quote by Charles Spurgeon

"A man who knows that he is saved by believing in Christ does not, when he is baptized, lift his baptism into a saving ordinance. In fact, he is the very best protester against that mistake, because he holds that he has no right to be baptized until he is saved."

Quote by John Stott

"Baptism with water is the sign and seal of baptism with the Spirit, as much as it is of the forgiveness of sins. Water-baptism is the initiatory Christian rite, because Spirit-baptism is the initiatory Christian experience."

Quote by Max Lucado

"Is it possible for an unbaptized believer to be saved? Yes, definitely. Should every believer be baptized? Yes, definitely."

Quote by Wayne Grudem

"Our justification from sins takes place at the point of saving faith, not at the point of water baptism, which usually occurs later. But if a person is already justified and has sins forgiven eternally at the point of saving faith, then baptism is not necessary for forgiveness of sins nor for the bestowal of new spiritual life. Baptism, then, is not necessary for salvation. But it is necessary if we are to be obedient to Christ, for He commanded baptism for all who believe in Him."

Quote by Max Lucado

"Baptism separates the tire kickers from the car buyers."

Quote by J.C. Ryle

"We ought to regard the sacrament of baptism with reverence. An ordinance of which the Lord Jesus Himself partook, is not to be lightly esteemed. An ordinance to which the great Head of the Church submitted, ought to be ever honorable in the eyes of professing Christians."

H.A. Ironside

"To the lover of the Lord Jesus Christ there can be nothing legal about baptism. It is simply the glad expression of a grateful heart recognizing its identity with Christ in death, burial, and resurrection. Many of us look back to the moment when we were thus baptized as one of the most precious experiences we have ever known."

Os Guinness - The Truth of Christianity

"Christianity is not true because it works (pragmatism); it is not true because it feels right (subjectivism); it is not true because it's "my truth" (relativism). It is true because it is anchored in the person of Christ. The Christian faith is not true because it works; it works because it is true. It is not true because we experience it; we experience it--deeply and gloriously--because it is true. It is not simply "true for us", it is true for any who seek in order to find, because truth is true even if nobody believes it, and falsehood is false even if everybody believes it. That is why truth does not yield to opinion, fashion, numbers, office, or sincerity--it is simply true and that is the end of it."

- Os Guinness, *Time for Truth*, p.p. 79-80.

Jesus Christ vs the Goddess Ganges

Missionary to India, M.V. Varghese tells the story of encountering a weeping young mother on the banks of the Ganges River, outside the Indian city of Hardwar. The woman was inconsolable, beating her chest in anguish. Her name was Alila. Varghese bent down to console the young mother and asked her what was wrong. Through her deep sobs she said, "The problems in my home are too many and my sins are heavy on my heart, so I offered the best I have to the goddess Ganges, my first born son." Less than an hour earlier she had waded out into the river, like so many Hindu mothers do, and tossed her son to his watery death, believing the Ganges would wash their sins away. Brother Varghese's heart ached for the desperate woman. As she wept, he gently began to tell her about the love of Jesus and that through Him her sins could be forgiven. That through the blood of Jesus, atonement for sin had been accomplished on the cross. She looked at him strangely. "I have never heard that before," she replied through her tears. "Why couldn't you have come thirty minutes earlier? If you did, my child would not have had to die." - *Christianity Today*, 1993.