

Next Sunday, we are going to celebrate Water Baptisms. It’s always one of my favorite times of the year for baptisms because it is the Sunday before Thanksgiving. I can’t think of a better time to be baptized, as it allows us to be thankful and remind ourselves of what Jesus has done for us. But you may be asking, “Why do we have this Spiritual Next Step of Water Baptism?” “Why do we do it? We do it with a spirit of thanksgiving because baptism is all about THREE THINGS:

1) Water Baptism Is About Identification

A. Baptism Identifies Us as A Child of God

John 1:12 Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God.

I’m thankful that water baptism allows us to identify ourselves as a Child of God.

B. In Baptism We Identify with the Death, Burial, and Resurrection of Christ

In water baptism, a Christian is bodily submerged in water as a public identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Our old sinful nature symbolically dies when we go under the water and then we are symbolically raised up, alive in Christ!

Romans 6:3-6

- 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 For if we have been united with him in a death like his, we will certainly also be united with him in a resurrection like his.**
- 6 For we know that our old self was crucified with him so that the body ruled by sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin-**

C. We Identify as Being Alive to God in Christ and Dead to Sin

Romans 6:11 In the same way, count yourselves (think of yourself as) dead to sin but alive to God in Christ Jesus.

When we come up out of the water, we come up as a new person in Christ Jesus. We are no longer controlled by sin, but we are alive in Christ Jesus! Dead to sin, alive in Christ!

- Were you selfish? That’s dead.
- Were you manipulative? That’s dead.
- Were you bitter? That’s dead.
- Were you an alcoholic? That’s dead.
- Were you addicted to drugs or even nicotine? That’s dead.
- Were you sexually immoral? That’s dead.
- Did any other sin control your life before? That’s dead.

Baptism is an outward expression of something that has already occurred in you at salvation.

Galatians 2:20 I died on the cross with Christ. And my present life is not that of the old "I", but the living Christ within me. The bodily life I now live, I live believing in the Son of God who loved me and sacrificed himself for me. [JBP]

BOLD NEXT STEP: I will use my baptism to remind me of my identity as a Child of God, free from sin!

2) Water Baptism Is About Declaration

I am thankful that water baptism allows us to make some bold public declarations. We publicly declare that we are a child of God and forgiven of all our sins. As we make this declaration, it gives us the fortitude to continue to Die to Self and continue to let Christ Jesus live through us!

A. We Declare That Jesus Forgave Us from All Our Sins

Colossians 2:12-13

12 ...having been buried with him in baptism and raised with him through your faith in the power of God, who raised him from the dead.

13 When you were dead in your sins and in the uncircumcision of your sinful nature, God made you alive with Christ. He forgave us all our sins.

Invite your friends and family to come hear, see, and witness this declaration of forgiveness.

People say, "Well, I love Jesus. I love Him. But, you know, I'm not a part of a local church. I'm not serving in a church. And, no I have not been baptized. I don't want to wear Christianity on my sleeve."

As a Christian, we wear it on our sleeve, not as a negative thing, but we are proud to say, *"You know what? I'm stepping up. I'm going public with my faith. I'm getting baptized!"*

B. We Declare Jesus is Now the Lord and Leader of Our Life

Romans 10:9 If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved

Don't be ashamed of what Jesus has done for you!

Luke 9:26 Whoever is ashamed of me and my words, the Son of Man will be ashamed of them when he comes in his glory and in the glory of the Father and of the holy angels.

C. We Declare That We Will Continue in Christ Jesus

Colossians 2:6 So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live your lives in him,

I John 2:28 And now, dear children, continue in him, so that when he appears we may be confident and unashamed before him at his coming.

BOLD NEXT STEP: This Thanksgiving I will boldly declare Jesus as my Lord and Leader by being water Baptized, Sunday, 11-21-21.

Baptism is all about three things: 1) Identification 2) Declaration and...

3) Water Baptism Is About Obedience

In Acts 2:38, we see a New Testament pattern for a new life in Christ. Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit

Acts 2:41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day. (Obedience!)

- Jesus Himself was baptized. He commanded us to be baptized and he tells us to baptize others in our great commission and, ever since He established His church, believers have been baptized.

- As far as we can tell throughout the Scriptures, everyone in the New Testament who surrendered their life to Christ Jesus was also baptized in water.

When people ask me how I summarize the Christian life, I give them a one-word answer. In one word, it's about obedience. That's the Christian life—obedience.

Jesus says, "Do this," and we do it--marriage, parenting, tithing, what we eat, and what we do. The Christian life is about obedience. It is a decision followed by a process, a process of obedience.

A. Jesus' Call for Us to Believe in Him Also Includes a Call to Be Baptized.

After we make a faith decision Jesus tells us to go public, to go on record, and to come out of the shadows into the light.

Mark 16:16 Whoever believes and is baptized will be saved, but whoever does not believe will be condemned.

- Jesus' call to believe and be baptized shows us the importance and high value that the Lord places on Baptism.
- Notice that even though we are expected to be baptized, Baptism is not what saves us- the believing does. "He who does not believe will be condemned." Baptism is an outward display of an inward change.

B. Are You Obediently Taking Your Next Step to Be Water Baptized?

Many of you have made a faith decision. **Have you gone public?**

Have you obeyed Christ's words and entered the waters of New Testament Baptism?

We say, *"I trust Christ with my eternity. I trust Christ with my forgiveness. But, I'm going to balk at the first test of obedience. I'm going to balk at Baptism."*

You don't want to start your spirit-filled walk of obedience to Christ Jesus with a blatant act of DIS-obedience.

- Disobedience to Jesus is not the path to the full blessing of Jesus.
- For many people here, your failure to get baptized, your failure to obey is that thing that is keeping you from going to the next level in your Christian walk.

So, here's my question to all of you. Have you been water baptized, immersed?

Join us in this celebration!

Baptism is all about IDENTIFICATION, DECLARATION, and OBEDIENCE.

BOLD NEXT STEP: If you profess Jesus but have not obediently been baptized, ask yourself why and give your answer to Christ Jesus.