

Sermon Title: **Baptism; a Symbol of Life**

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Scripture Reference: **Romans 6:1-11**

Thesis: **Paul parallels our Baptism with the Christ's death, burial and resurrection;**

Purpose: **Today, we will see the meaning and purpose of our own baptism.**

Key Word: "Baptism"

I) Introduction:

Scripture Reading is: **Romans 6:1-11**

A) The Setting:

- 1) **Illustration: A man who had been drinking was walking through the woods when he came upon a preacher baptizing people in the river.** He proceeds into the water and subsequently bumps into the preacher. The pastor turns around almost overcome by the smell of alcohol; he grabs the man and asks "are you ready to find Jesus?" "Yup," Came the reply. The preacher man grabs a hold of the old Drunk and dunks him straight into the water. He grabs him back out and asks him, "Son, have you found Jesus...?" "Nope", the man says. "I'm afraid I haven't found Jesus. Try again." The preacher, surprised at the answer, submerges him again but for a little while longer. Again, he yanks him out of the river and asks, "Have you found Jesus yet?!" The drunk looks blankly at the preacher and again answers – "No! I have not found Jesus!" A bit angered, shocked and losing patience, the preacher forcibly plunges the drunkard back underwater – this time for what must be a full thirty seconds before he pulls him up with all his strength and yells at the man..."For the love of God man, have you found Jesus Christ?!" The drunk staggers to his feet, wipes his faces and eyes, coughing and spitting out water; finding his breath he says, "Preacher... Are you sure this is where he fell in?"
- 2) **A couple weeks ago, we looked at God and the Trinity.**
  - (a) Jesus' spoke these words to his disciples telling them to make disciples,
  - (b) baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit,
  - (c) And to teach them everything He had commanded them.
- 3) **So today, we are talking about that Baptism.**
  - (a) There is a lot of confusion and misunderstanding about baptism.
  - (b) **If someone were to ask you why baptism was important, what would you tell them?**
    - (i) Is baptism necessary to receive God's salvation?
    - (ii) Is it a necessary requirement that everyone be initiated into the church club as a member?
    - (iii) Should we baptize infants or children?
- 4) **What about the method?**
  - (a) Is it better if you be completely immersed?
  - (b) Or can we just sprinkle a few drops on your head?
- 5) **Well, this is what we are going to look at this morning.**
  - (a) In Paul's letter to the Romans, he parallels our Baptism with the Christ's death, burial and resurrection.
  - (b) Paul is talking about God's grace which is unmerited and unearned favor from God.
  - (c) Some were reasoning that if God's grace is great to forgive our sins . . .
  - (d) Then we should sin even more so we can receive even more grace.
  - (e) Well, Paul has an answer for that and it is a good way for us to introduce our topic this morning.

B) So, let's see what Paul has to say in our scripture reading for today in **Romans 6:1-11.**

A) *Sermon Prayer*

## B) (The Hook)

1) **We are called Baptist; do you know why?**

- (a) Our best historical evidence says that Baptists came into existence in England in the early seventeenth century.<sup>1</sup>
- (b) They apparently emerged out of the Puritan-Separatist movement in the Church of England.
- (c) *This was the State sponsored church and the official religion of Great Britain.*
- (d) *Almost everyone was baptized into it as infants.* (added)
- (e) **Some of these earnest people read the Bible in their own language, believed it, and sought to live by it.**
  - (i) They formed separate congregations which accepted only believers into their membership, and they baptized converts upon their profession of faith.
  - (ii) Their opponents nicknamed them "AnaBaptists," and the name stuck.

2) **The name Anabaptist means "one who baptizes again".<sup>2</sup>**

- (a) Their persecutors named them this, referring to the practice of baptizing persons when they converted or declared their faith in Christ, even if they had been "baptized" as infants.
- (b) *Anabaptists required that baptismal candidates be able to make a confession of faith that is freely chosen . . .*
- (c) Also, indicating their rejection of the practice of baptizing infants.
- (d) The early members of this movement did not accept the name Anabaptist, claiming that infant baptism was not part of scripture and was therefore null and void.
- (e) They said that the baptizing of self-confessed believers was their first true baptism:

TS: **So, whose right? Well, let's see starting with the first question . . .**

## II) Body: (Key Points)

A) Key Point #1: **Is baptism necessary to receive God's salvation?**

- 1) **This is one doctrine that separates us from the Roman Catholic faith.**
  - (a) They believe that our salvation is based on being baptized;
  - (b) It is at this exact moment that your sanctification takes place.
- 2) **However, the Bible teaches that Salvation comes by faith.**
  - (a) *Ephesians 2:8, "For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God, 9 not by works; so, that no one can boast."*
  - (b) *Romans 10:9, "that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved;"*
  - (c) *1 Peter 1:9, "obtaining as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls."*
- 3) **So, if we gain salvation by our faith, then it would be a contradiction to have to do something to earn it such as being baptized.**
  - (a) Therefore, we as Baptist believe that Baptism is not a requirement for Salvation.
  - (b) Your salvation is achieved by your faith in Jesus alone; a faith that gives over control of your life to God.

TS: **So, for the next question . . .**

B) Key Point #2: **Is it a necessary requirement that everyone be initiated into the church club as a member?**

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.baptisthistory.org/baptistorigins/baptistbeginnings.html>

<sup>2</sup> <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Baptists>

- 1) **Our Church Constitution does say that to be a member of this church does require that one be Baptized in order to be a member.**
  - (a) So, why is that if it is not a requirement for Salvation?
  - (b) Because, while it has nothing to do with your salvation Jesus did command that a believer be Baptized.
  - (c) The Baptism is an outward expression of the faith we profess.
  - (d) You are publicly identifying with Jesus and being a follower of Christ.
- 2) In **Matthew 10:33**, Jesus said, **"But whoever denies Me before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven."** (NASV)
  - (a) If we are a true believer, then we should not be ashamed to admit that we have a new relationship.
  - (b) If you get a new girlfriend or boyfriend, then most people want to be seen out in public to show them off and let people know you have a relationship.
- 3) **The church is the bride of Christ and Jesus expects that we will want others to know about Him.**
  - (a) **Besides, there is no better time to announce to your friends and family of your commitment to Jesus than at the beginning of the relationship.**
    - (i) It is a time to celebrate and to rejoice.
    - (ii) It is a time to announce that you are under new management.
    - (iii) It is a great witness and people will begin to see if this relationship is real or superficial.
  - (b) **Therefore, while you do not need to be baptized for your salvation; you should want to do it out of obedience to Jesus command as a sign of the change in your life.**

TS: **The next question should be obvious, . . .**

- C) Key Point #3: **Should we baptize infants or children?**
  - 1) **Since, your salvation comes from you personally placing your faith in Jesus and Baptism has nothing to do with it; the answer should be no.**
    - (a) An infant cannot make a personal choice of faith in Jesus.
    - (b) And baptism is a sign of repentance; we are saying in effect that we are aligning our will to go along with the WILL of GOD.
  - 2) **Some might say; but that is embarrassing and the answer is yes.**
    - (a) Repentance is our admitting that we are not right with God; and that we want God's help to get us right.
    - (b) Nobody like to admit faults; but, if something is wrong the first step in fixing it is admitting there is a problem.
    - (c) The good news is that God wants everyone to be right with Him.
  - 3) **But what if something happens to that infant or child before they make a decision to be a follower of Jesus?**
    - (a) We believe that until a child reaches the age of understanding that they are innocent in the eyes of God.
    - (b) It is not until they are able to understand and make a decision to follow or reject Christ that someone is held accountable.
  - 4) **So, what is that age of understanding where one is held accountable?**
    - (a) It is different for every individual; only God knows when that happens and we cannot be the judge.
    - (b) Admittedly; there are some, who never reach that age even as adults because of mental disabilities.
    - (c) They are just part of God's special children.
  - 5) **While a child may not have the full understanding of an adult; if the child can express what it is that they believe and wishes to be baptized, then I will do it.**
    - (a) But it should not be because their parents are pushing them into it.

- (b) Or because they are feeling pressure from peers or others; it has to be their own personal decision.
- (c) Remember, Jesus was thirty before he asked to be baptized.
- (d) So, don't give up hope that your child will never come to ask.

TS: **So, the final question is . . .**

D) Key Point #4: **What about the method?**

- 1) **When Jesus was baptized He was baptized in the Jordan River and he was immersed.**
  - (a) Since Jesus commanded His followers to be baptized I believe that it was to be done in the same way that Jesus did.
  - (b) Another reason, for us not to baptize infants since they cannot publicly confess their dedication to Jesus, make a personal decision to be baptized, nor understand why we are dipping them under water.
- 2) **While there are differing opinions concerning the form of Baptism, according to "The New Unger's Bible Dictionary"**
  - (a) Baptism is defined as the application of water as a rite of purification or initiation.
  - (b) Therefore, I believe that Baptism is a symbol of complete surrender to a relationship with a God who is worthy and powerful.
- 3) **I believe that Baptism should be accomplished whenever possible by being fully immersed.**
  - (a) We are following the example set for us by Jesus who is the one who can cleanse us from our SINS.
  - (b) Baptism is a sign of this relationship which has already begun to take place in the life of the professing believer.
- 4) **Baptism is also a symbol of Christ's death, burial and resurrection.**
  - (a) Christian Baptism symbolizes regeneration (rebirth) through our union with Christ; (Romans 6:3-5) **"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."**
  - (b) Baptism portrays Christ's death and resurrection and their purpose in atoning for sin;
  - (c) Christ's death and resurrection delivers sinners from sin's penalty and power.
  - (d) The water also powerfully symbolizes the cleansing of our sins.
  - (e) **These things can only be said when using the immersion method.**
- 5) **However, if for health reasons someone cannot physically do it;**
  - (a) Then, I believe that God understands when we modify the method.
  - (b) For it is more important to acknowledge Jesus publicly than for the immersion of the candidate.

TS: **So, as we bring this study to a close; what do we take with us when we leave?**

III) Conclusion (Life Application)

A) **Jesus gave the job of baptizing believers first to His disciples.**

- 1) **Christian Baptism is a witness of that which has already taken place in the life of the person baptized.**
- 2) **Christian Baptism is only for believers!**
  - (a) It is not the means of salvation!
  - (b) It is the testimony of salvation!
  - (c) Christ said to believe and be baptized, not be baptized and believe.

- 3) **We are baptized because Jesus told us to; if we believe Jesus is Lord then we will do as He instructed.**
    - (a) This is our best opportunity to witness to nonbelievers about the work of the Holy Spirit.
    - (b) To tell all, your family and friends, of God's transforming power; his ability to make us new.
    - (c) To witness the power of our new birth as God begins to transform us into the likeness of His Son.
  - 4) **John said that when Jesus came, he would baptize us with the Holy Spirit.**
    - (a) What does this mean?
    - (b) What is the baptism of the Holy Spirit really all about?
    - (c) **The Holy Spirit is the third person of God (THE TRINITY)**
  - 5) **The office of Christ was and is to baptize with the Holy Spirit in Matthew 3:11 (John Speaking) "I baptize you with water for repentance. But after me will come one who is more powerful than I, whose sandals I am not fit to carry. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire."**
  - 6) When Jesus left, He told us that He must go away so that the comforter would come. **(Acts 1:4b & 8) "Do not leave Jerusalem, but wait for the gift my Father promised, which you have heard me speak about. 5 For John baptized with water, but in a few days, you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit."**
  - 7) **We are Spiritual beings with a longing to be filled with the Spirit of God.**
    - (a) It is this Spiritual side that will one day live with God in Heaven.
    - (b) **Suffice it to say that when we accept Christ as Lord and Savior, the Holy Spirit comes to fill our spiritual void.**
      - (i) Having accepted Jesus gift of salvation we have been cleansed of the penalty of our sins;
      - (ii) God can now take up residence within us and begin the work of regeneration in our lives **(2 Cor. 5:17) (Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new CREATION, the Old has Gone, the new has come!)**
      - (iii) We are truly reborn as a new creation spiritually speaking.
      - (iv) The Holy Spirit comes to Guide, Transform, Inspire, Convince, Comfort, Intercede & Sanctify.
  - 8) Truly God with us!
- IV) Invitation: **Let us Pray!**