

BC 34 – Baptism: The Significance, the Command, the Method

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ: We will now move from the general teachings on the sacraments to the specifics of the sacraments. We will start with the specifics of baptism 洗礼 over 2 weeks.

The historical and biblical doctrine of baptism is under attack. So give good attention and keep these notes for reference. Today we will examine 3 areas of the doctrine of baptism.

Our headings are:

The Significance重要性 of Baptism

The Command to Baptism

The Method of Baptism

Our goals are: **That you will learn how much God cherishes you and marks you as his own through Jesus, and that that will move you to love and serve him better.**

The Significance of Baptism

We believe and confess that Jesus Christ, who is **the end of the law**, has made an end, by the shedding of His blood, of all other sheddings of blood which men could or would make as a propitiation or satisfaction for sin; and that He, having abolished circumcision, which was done with blood, has instituted the sacrament of baptism instead thereof; by which we are received into the Church of God, and **separated from all other people** and strange religions, that we may wholly **belong to Him** whose mark and ensign we bear; and which serves as a **testimony to us** that He will forever be our gracious God and Father 我们相信并承认那律法之终结的耶稣基督，借着流出的宝血结束的律法，同时也结束了其他一切人为罪所作赎罪的流血；基督既除去了用血所立的割礼，就设立了洗礼；借此我们被接纳入神的教会，与其他的人和奇异宗教隔离，分别为圣，完全属他，我们身上带着他的印记与旗号；为我们作见证，证明我们永远属于恩慈的父神。

1. Circumcision割礼, the first covenant sign, was completed - fulfilled. It was a temporary sign pointing to the death of Christ, by which the sinner is made clean. **It was completed when Jesus died on the cross** so it necessarily had to be replaced. It is illogical to have a sign for that which is in front of you. But since a **covenant must always have a sign** 记号, and since a **bloody sign was no longer necessary** (all bloody sacrifices pointed to Christ), **God graciously replaced covenant circumcision with a non-bloody sign, covenant baptism.**

2. But baptism was not an arbitrary or insignificant sign that God just made up. It was much more than a red ribbon on a suitcase when traveling. Baptism is a special sensible sign with special significance. God used water because it pictured being made clean, just like circumcision pictured the baby being made clean. **Baptism reminds you that your sins have been washed away,** just as water washes away dirt from the body. In your baptism Jesus binds himself to his promises (your adoption 嗣养, redemption, and sanctification) and he binds himself to you. He gave you his Word - the terms of the covenant.

3. Baptism is also a seal印记. It is a mark of ownership that God places on you. Baptism assured you that your soul was marked a “property of Christ.” A man proves he loves his bride and assuring her of his love. He gives her a ring, AND publicly and privately displaying his love. **The ring on the finger does not make the marriage. It is the regular assurances of love on the heart!** Even more strongly, baptism is a **branding of soul to show ownership.**
Romans 4:11 And he received the sign of circumcision, **a seal of the righteousness of the faith...**

4. Baptism means you are separated from your all sins and joined to Christ and to each other in the covenant family.

You were in Christ when he died, when he was buried, and when he rose again from the dead.

Romans 6: 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were **baptized into His death**? **4** Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. **5** For if we have been **united together** in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection 复活, **6** knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. **7** For he who has died has been freed from sin. **8** Now if we died with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, **9** knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. **11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed**

to sin, but **alive to God** in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Apostle Paul made the point that those who were already baptized were inexorably united in Christ. And importantly, he did not intend to teach of the mode of baptism, but he wanted to **remind Christians that they were united with Christ** and therefore could not live however they wanted. (Remember, when interpreting a text, context 上下文 is king.) Because Christ died and rose again from the dead and you were in him, death no longer has dominion over you. And you show that you are alive by being baptized and living for him.

Those who carelessly argue that being buried with Christ was a symbol of the method of baptism will have a hard time explaining how we “put on” Christ in baptism, or how the Holy Spirit was “poured out” in baptism. (Gal 3:27 “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **put on Christ**.” Acts 2: 17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That **I will pour out** of My Spirit on all flesh...’)

The truth is, those who were “put under” water usually symbolized destruction in the Bible. Pharaoh and his army were put under water, not Israel. The people of the flood were put under water, not Noah. On the other hand, the Bible teaches that Noah’s baptism symbolized our baptism – as rain fell on him. (1Pet 3:20)

It is hard to imagine God using a picture of judgment and destruction as a symbol of saving and safety!

5. You are to be baptized because God wants you to be a witness 见证 of him. You publicly state, as Israel when they painted the blood on the door posts in Egypt, that you belong to your faithful Savior.

The Command to Baptism

Therefore **He has commanded all those who are His to be baptized** with pure water, into the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, thereby signifying to us, that as water washes away the filth of the body when poured upon it 因此他吩咐一切属他的人，要“奉圣父、圣子、圣灵的名用清水接受洗礼”，借此说明水洗除我们身体的污秽

1. As a believer, God, who freed you from your sins through his Son, commanded you to show your redemption by submitting to baptism. God demands that you accept the mark he puts on you – and it is his mark. Jesus instituted 设立 (Matthew 28) this and his disciples reiterated this command.

Acts 2: 38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and **let every one of you be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins...

In Genesis 17 and Exodus 4 the Lord threatened death to the person who refused to take the sign of the covenant. So it was not something to spurn 鄙弃. God was about to kill Moses for not putting the covenant sign on his son. It is a sign of great ignorance, but a sign of great arrogance to refuse to put the sign of the covenant on a covenant child. If God includes children into the covenant, you must not dare to exclude them.

2. Note the passive position of the believer. He is baptized. **The believer simply assents to or receives baptism.**

3. Those who refuse to submit themselves or their children, as you shall see next time, to baptism are therefore in open defiance against the Lord and show a dismissive attitude to what Christ has done on the cross.

4. If you are a Christian, have you been baptized? If you know someone who is a Christian and has not been baptized, are you silent? If you know someone who has children who have not been baptized, do you speak up?

The Method of Baptism

...and is seen on the body of the **baptized when sprinkled** upon him, so does the blood of Christ by the power of the Holy Spirit internally sprinkle the soul, cleanse it from its sins, and regenerate us from children of wrath unto children of God. Not that this is effected by the external water, but by the **sprinkling of the precious blood of the Son of God**; who is our Red Sea, through which we must pass to escape the tyranny of Pharaoh, that is, the devil, and to enter into the spiritual land of Canaan 照样基督的血借着圣灵的能力，浇灌我们里面的灵魂，洗净我们灵魂的罪，重生我们脱离可恶之子，而成为神的儿女。这并不在于外部水的功效，乃在于神儿子所洒的宝血；他是我们的红海，为了逃避法老的暴政，是我们必须经过的法老——就是魔鬼——进入属灵的迦南美地。

1. Baptism is properly done by sprinkling or pouring.

a. You must look at how “baptism” is done in the Bible. If you read a book about how Sri Lankans eat, you might think of a table with some knife and forks...but Sri Lankans rarely ever use knife and forks. They eat with their fingers...or with spoons. You may not implant your idea of eating on them. You must consider the context.

b. Ezekiel stated that Christ would sprinkle his church and make her clean. So look at context!

Ezekiel 36:25 "Then **I will sprinkle clean water** on you, and you shall be clean; I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.

Moses taught about the sprinkling of sinner who was made clean.

Leviticus 14:51 "and he shall take the cedar wood, the hyssop, the scarlet, and the living bird, and dip them in the blood of the slain bird and in the running water, and **sprinkle** the house seven times
然後拿香柏木、牛膝草、朱紅色線和那隻活鳥，都一同蘸在被宰殺的鳥血和活水中，向房屋彈七次。

c. The writer of Hebrews testified that Jesus sprinkled you... animal blood wasn't enough to clean you!

Hebrews 12: 24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the **blood of sprinkling** that speaks better things than that of Abel.

d. How does a fountain work?

Zechariah 13: 1 "In that day **a fountain shall be opened** for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, **for sin and for uncleanness.**

David asked for sprinkling in Psalm 51. Interesting thought: If you were under the cross you would have been sprinkled with the blood and then water of the cross. (Remember the spear in Jesus' side? So God instituted that we use water. But the meaning is the same. **How we became defensive of sprinkling, I have no idea.**

2. What about immersion浸礼, then? Immersion is a possible translation of "baptism." Because Jesus came "out of the water" is not proof that he was immersed. (The Jordan can be knee deep.) Those who argue that baptism must be by immersion only would have to prove that baptism by sprinkling and pouring, as was clearly done, was abolished废除 by God. But keep in mind that the amount of water used in your baptism does not make it more or less effective. **It is one who works in you and indeed washes away your sins that makes the true difference.** So if you were baptized by immersion, don't worry. It is still valid.

Cases for immersion are largely done by inference推理, not proof. Cases for sprinkling or pouring prevail.

3. But look at 2 illogical things from those who oppose sprinkling or pouring.

a. They argue that the sign must be a washing of dirt from the body. But is the person made clean by **dipping into water with their clothes on**? Does anyone wash like that? To keep their argument, the minister would literally have to wash each person with soap. That would be ridiculous!

b. To insist on the large volume of water and immersion, the sign would lose its consistency with what it signifies. How come? While the Bible does say that the blood of Christ washes away sins from your soul, it wasn't a literal washing of the soul; the blood of Christ doesn't literally wash your conscience. So to be consistent, you cannot have a literal washing of the body – like immersion!

Conclusion:

Baptism is significant because it is a sign and a seal of your incorporation结合 into Christ and a sign and seal that Christ promises to forgive all your sins. All believers are required to be baptized. Baptism is to be done by sprinkling or pouring.

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

a. Know how precious you are that God wants to mark you. Take his mark. Love his mark. Thank him for it. Know what the mark signifies.

b. Be a testimony to others of the work of the one who baptized you and forgave you your sins. This is where doctrines get teeth. You are clean and others will see you as clean...and you will tell others why you are clean. Never be ashamed to speak of your baptism. The Israelites had the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts and lintel门楣 of their front doors, not just as evidence that their sins were forgiven, but also as a public testimony-and what a testimony that was to the Egyptians. No wonder many of them left with the Jews. They knew beyond doubt that the Jews were the people of God by the blood.

Finally, baptism doesn't save you. It saves no one. But it does show that you belong to Christ and he to you. But if you are not a Christian, you are a child of the Devil...a child of the Devil who will be justly condemned... if you don't look to Christ for pardon.