

Baptism Celebration – 3/26/17

Welcome to our Baptism Celebration; A total of 29 people are getting baptized this weekend, and it's always a joy

But before we get to them, I want to take few minutes to tell you a few things *about* baptism; 6 things to be exact; Starting with this . . .

1. It's an expression of belief

Baptism is one of the main ways in the Bible, for us to say publicly, that we believe personally; That we believe in Jesus; That we trust him by faith

Each/every person getting baptized has *admitted* they're a sinner in need of a Savior . . .

They *believe* that when Jesus died on the cross, he died for them . . .

They've *repented* of their sin, asking God to forgive them . . .

And have *received* him into their life, to live for him

And baptism is an expression of all that

Several times in the Bible you find statements like. . .

When they believed . . . they were baptized (Acts 8:12)

And *those who received his word were baptized* (Acts 2:41)

Why? To *express* their belief; To *show* their faith in Jesus

By the very act of being baptized, each and every person is expressing their belief

2. It's a declaration of identity

Identity as a child of God

Having been united with him, *through* Christ, each and every person is saying – “I’m his child; A part of his family”

Like **Gal 4:4-5** says – [4] *When the fullness of time had come, God sent forth his Son... so that we might receive adoption as sons.*

Each person being baptized has been adopted into God's family*****

And *by* being baptized, they're declaring it

3. It's a proclamation of allegiance

Allegiance to Jesus Christ, as Lord of their lives

2 Cor 5:15 says – *He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*

Jesus died so you and I would no longer live for ourselves, but for him – that he would be Lord of our lives; And baptism is a *proclamation* of that allegiance

“Jesus Christ is Lord of my life, and I’m not ashamed to proclaim it”*****

That's what each and every person is saying by being baptized

4. It's an act of obedience

Just like any other act of obedience in the Bible, baptism is a part of working *out your own salvation with fear and trembling* (Ph 2:12); Something we're *told* to do

Like the Apostle Peter said in Acts 2:38 – *repent and be baptized every one of you*

And Jesus, in **Mt 28:19** – *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*

Which makes it an act of obedience; Jesus taught it, the apostles commanded it, and the early church practiced it*****

5. It's a picture of salvation

Salvation from *judgment*, and salvation in *Christ*

It's a picture of salvation from *judgment*, b/c 1 Pet 3 says that baptism corresponds to the flood, and Noah's deliverance from it

Meaning that the *waters* of baptism represent God's judgment in the waters of the flood; And coming out of the water unscathed, pictures our *deliverance* fr judgment

So baptism is a picture of salvation from judgment

And, it's a picture of our salvation in *Christ*

That due to our faith in him, and connection with him, and union with him – we are delivered from judgment in *him*, just like Noah was delivered in the ark

And then given new *life* in him, just like Noah was given new life on the earth

So baptism is a picture of our salvation – an outward portrayal of what has already taken place inwardly

That we've been forgiven of our sin, saved from death, and assured of life

And then last . . .

6. It's an opportunity for praise

An opportunity to magnify and glorify the Lord for all that he's done in saving you

Like when David said to God in **Ps 40:9-10** – *I have told the glad news of deliverance in the great congregation; behold, I have not restrained my lips, as you know, O LORD.*

[10] *I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation.*

That's praise; And that's exactly what each and every person is doing by giving a verbal testimony; They're magnifying God's work of salvation, all the more

Reinforcing what we *see*, with what we *hear* (**Summary**)

6 truths about baptism

➤ All of which encourage *other* believers, challenge *unbelievers*, and glorify God
Baptism encourages believers by reminding us of *our* walk with Christ, and *our* salvation, and *our* commitment to him; Spurring us on

It challenges *unbelievers*, those who *don't* believe in Jesus, by revealing what God *can* and wants to do in *their* lives

If that's you, I trust you'll listen closely; B/c I'm going to give you an opportunity to respond at the end

And last, baptisms glorify God by pointing to the one who saved us in the first place
His work of grace in their lives

➤ I hope that stirs your heart and increases your anticipation for all this
And that your joy will be full as you watch and listen

Pray – Lord, bless each and every person getting baptized; Impress on them *and* us, the meaning and significance of it all; May this be a Spirit-filled time, for your glory and our joy (Get in tank)

Post-Baptisms

You just heard ____ different stories of how God used the circumstances of life, to get their attention and prepare their heart to receive the Gospel – the good news
That God so loved us, he sent his Son to die in our place; To take the punishment *we* deserve for our sin, and give us new life in exchange; That's the gospel

But it only applies (**Slide**), if you first . . .

Admit you're a sinner

The Bible says – *All have sinned and fall short of the glory of God* (Rom 3:23)

And embracing the Gospel starts by admitting that includes you

That in God's eyes, you're missing the mark

Believe in Jesus

And that when he died, he died for you; And then rose again so you could too

So you could be spared from an eternity of judgment, and given new life

Repent of your sins

Asking God to forgive you, cleanse you, and help you turn from them

Receive him into your life

Giving him full rule and reign as *Lord* of your life; Living his way, and enjoying his presence, never to be forsaken

Admit, believe, repent, and receive

➤ If you're ready to do that – pray with me right now

I admit . . . I believe . . . I repent . . . I receive

Pray for offering

If you just prayed with me, we praise God for you, and want you to do 2 things:

1. Pick up a **New Believer's Packet** at the door (Ushers come forward)
2. *Tell* someone about your decision; Maybe even before you leave the building

Close

Welcome Packet; New Believer's Packet; Elder prayer

Would those of you who were baptized (**Baptism Recognition**) come down front, so we can recognize and praise God for you as a church?

Acts 2:41 says – *Those who received his word* [Peter's preaching of the gospel] *were baptized, and there were added that day about three thousand souls.*

Added to the church; The fellowship of the redeemed

So we want to formally acknowledge that, and extend a personal welcome to you

Making this as meaningful and memorable for you as possible

So right after the benediction, just make your way down front and express that, will you?

Shake their hand and say – “God bless you; Thank you for your testimony”

To him who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood . . . to him [Jesus] *be glory and dominion forever and ever. Amen* (Rev 1:5b-6)

God bless you; You are loved