

The Life Challenge

"I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." John 10:10

Sermon Series: Body Building
Title: The Picture of the New You
Speaker: Steve Berg
Text: Colossians 2:9-12
Date: April 15, 2018



WARM-UP

- Why did you get baptized? Do any of the following sound familiar:
 - ⇒ It's a command
 - ⇒ Jesus got baptized so I should too
 - ⇒ My friends were getting baptized
 - ⇒ I was pressured by parents/leaders
- Do some have a 'jaundiced view' of the church? For example, "I haven't been baptized because I don't want to become a member of the church," or, "I've been burned by some hypocritical people, forget-about-it."

DISCUSSION

Review the Key Text: Colossians 2:9-12 (NLT)

- Raised to new life – not by a physical procedure but by a spiritual transformation

THREE KEYS: Deepening our Understanding of Baptism

1) **Baptism is a public telling of your story of repentance and faith in Jesus**

Two examples of an outward act in public settings:

- Acts 2:37
- Romans 10:9

2) **Baptism is a spiritual union: Romans 6:3-4**

IDENTIFICATION with Christ

- Joined with Christ in his death: died and buried with Him
- Raised to a new life (resurrection) like Christ was raised - by the "glorious power of the Father."

3) **BAPTISM TELLS THE STORY THAT GOD PLACES US INTO CHRIST'S BODY**

INCORPORATION: Acts 2:38; I Corinthians 12:12-13

- **We are baptized then by the Spirit into the Body of Christ and made part of the living Christ...** All Christians who are born again have already been baptized by the Spirit, so when somebody asks you, "Have you been baptized by the Holy Spirit?" the answer is, "Yes," if you are a Christian. You could not be a Christian without having been baptized by the Holy Spirit - you are made part of His body.
- An individual part is taken into (integrated) the whole part: 1 Corinthians 12:12

INITIATION:

- "It's the beginning," and refers to reception and entrance into a committed membership. The early church used water as the preferred form of symbolizing the passage of a person into church membership. It signalled the believer's

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entry into the fellowship of a local church and also signalled that incorporation into the body of Christ had already occurred.

- An individual becomes part of the uniting elements - Ephesians 4:4

In Review: Baptism by water is a public sign that a person has:

- Repented of sin
- Received forgiveness
- Died with Christ
- Been raised to a new life by the Holy Spirit's power
- Been incorporated into the Body of Christ expressed in a local church

Some Basic Questions:

- Is baptism by immersion in water? It was the case in Jesus' time.
- Is it possible to repent of sin, place my faith in Christ, be baptized, surrendered to the work of the Spirit - but say, "I am not a member of the Body of Christ?"
 - ⇒ *"The New Testament idea of initiation is [that] of becoming a Christian-in-the-church. There is no 'flight of the alone to the alone;' we are saved in company, as units in the body of Christ, or not at all." Obedience to Christ demands that we join God's visible community." JI Packer*
- When should a person get baptized? Acts 16:30-34
- Is there a reason to wait for baptism? "...When professing people with credible conversion experiences postpone baptism indefinitely, they are really declaring their unwillingness to submit to the lordship of Christ. Faith without the good work of baptism is incomplete." Baptism and Church Membership - Ray Bystrom
- Is there an age to be baptized? A person who undertakes baptism should have a "credible conversion experience."
 - ⇒ "For you are all children of God through faith in Christ Jesus. And all who have been united with Christ in baptism have put on Christ, like putting on new clothes." Galatians 3:26-27

Applications/Ponderings: Looking in the Mirror - The Picture of the New You ?

- Beyond "jumping through hoops" or "going through the motions":
 - ⇒ How has this message deepened and refreshed your understanding of baptism?
 - ⇒ How has your mirrored view of yourself as the "new you" changed your perspective of 1) yourself and 2) the church?
- As a parent, how can you help your child come to a growing understanding of baptism?
- How did you deal with baptism when your child asked questions about it?
- How can you help others to reconsider baptism -- those who previously have chosen not to be baptized?