

I. Introduction and Review of Foundational Teachings

Last week, we took the time to redefine probably the central key teaching of the Bible, and everybody should be up to speed on that at this point. Of course, that essential teaching was the Kingdom of God versus the Kingdom of Heaven. We took the time to go into great detail to lay it out, and it needed to be done, especially where we are right now and what we are going to try to deal with. It kind of puts everybody on the same page. I did not see it at the time we were doing it, but I understand better now why it was important to do it. Given the fact that we are going to start putting the Bible together, a biblical study of how to put the Word of God together, coming up next week, you are going to start that. Certainly, if there is one thing that you cannot get past in doing your Bible, it is understanding that concept. We had a great opportunity last week to do that.

I was so impressed with my own visuals that I decided to use another visual today. Today, we are going to go back to our seven baptisms. Even as we continue to move through this study on the seven baptisms, you are going to see again how the Kingdom of God and the Kingdom of Heaven fit together. I made a mistake last week in one of my references, and Shelley and John asked me about it this morning. In the process of us talking about it, her and John had given me, it was like God just turned a light on. In their question of asking me if this was the right, and we found it over here, did you have the wrong reference, which I did, it brought out a tremendous concept that I had missed. We were sitting out there, and I thought, "I cannot wait to go home and put this in my Bible," because it showed me an even greater thing that we needed to see.

A lot of good things come out of it. As we go through everything we studied this morning and throughout the next, really the rest of our time together until Jesus comes, you will find that everything that we teach you about the Bible, everything that we deal with in the Bible, will literally fall on one side or the other: Kingdom of God or the Kingdom of Heaven.

Understanding how that all works is absolutely crucial in putting your Bible together. Yet, you are going to find, and you hear me say this all the time, that most of God's people, most Christians, certainly most preachers, they do not have a clue what to do with, like we talked about last time, the baptism of John.

So far, we have come through two of the baptisms. We looked at 1 Corinthians 10 the first time we talked about the baptism of Moses; we laid that out. Then we talked about the last time we were in the baptism in Matthew 3, the baptism of John. You would be hard pressed to find a pastor or even a Christian that would really be able to define for you what the baptism of John is. There are certain verses in the Bible that scare preachers to death. The reason why they scare them to death is because they do not know what to do with them. Because those verses look like they teach a teaching that we do not believe as Christians, and because they do not know how to rightly divide the word of truth, when somebody asks these questions, they go into paranoid mode. That is why a lot of pastors will never allow you an open forum to ask questions about the Bible. They are afraid that you will expose their inadequacy in the Word of God.

Now, I do not do a question and answer because I do not have any inadequacy in the Bible. I let you ask questions and answers because I do not care if you expose my inadequacies of the Word of God. I told you last Thursday night, sometime you want to have a good Thursday night Bible study, I will just list the things that I do not know about the Bible. I do not know everything about the Bible. God has been good to me in what He has taught me, but I can tell you right now that you could put what I know about the Bible in a thimble compared to the truth that is in that, compared to all the oceans of this world together. It is one of those things where you just never come to the place in your life where you think you know it all. When you do, you are in serious trouble.

I like to learn from you, just as much as you learn from me. There is hardly a time that you do not come over to my house and we sit down and talk about the Bible that I do not get something out of it that maybe I do not say anything about it, but I get it. So, it is a two-way street. I do not ever want you to fall into the situation where you have to be afraid of somebody asking you questions about the Bible. I know some of you are right now because you are young Christians, but we are about to enter the process by which we change all that.

Another thing that we are going to do adjacent to learning how to put the Bible together is that I am going to try to begin to build a resource of material for you. I think that every month I am going to get a few things that we can put into a situation where you can get a list of what they are. Jan Hepworth has a list of every tape that I have probably ever done in my life, going back to the 80s. He has turned, I think he has got every Bible study I ever taught, every session of lessons I ever taught. He turned them over to Doug and Terry, and they are going to organize that. We are going to come up with a tape library where there will be a piece of paper or a notebook that has all of the subjects listed. You can go back and you can say, "Okay, I want to take this out," and they will bring it to you on Sunday or Thursday, and you will get it, you will study it, and you will bring it back.

You will be able to, one of the things that I want to do this year is to really broaden your ability to get a lot of things. I told you this was going to be a defining year, and it certainly is. It is going to be a year where we get a lot of things done and a lot of things get revealed to you about yourself, about what you need to work on. I told the people in our marriage class, "Our marriage class is designed for a lot of different things, but one of the things that it is designed to do is to expose problems." If you do not ever see what the problem is, you are never able to fix the problem.

I think Christians go through their whole lives and focus, they want to, we are in such a state in Christianity that we always want to focus on the positive, that we do not want to focus on the negative. You will never learn to grow until you understand what is wrong with you. I do not mean there is anything bad wrong with you, but every one of us sitting in here have deficiencies when it comes to learning the Word of God. I know what my deficiencies are. I have corrected a lot of them; some of them, I do not want to correct. But I know what they are. What are you laughing at me for? You do not even know what they are in your life. At least I know what mine are.

I teach people when they start to really get into dealing with people in the Bible. I have a number of rules that you have to follow, like the laws of the Medes and the Persians. I call them the absolute fundamental rules of biblical law, the absolute fundamental rules of biblical counseling. There are rules that you have to ascribe to and you have to operate by. Do you know what rule number one is? Rule, and it may not, somebody is going to say, "I got a list you did in 1988, and that was not rule number one." Well, I revised that; that one is no good anymore.

Do you know what rule number one is? If you are going to deal with people, if you are going to be a pastor, if you are going to be a leader in anything that you do, rule number one is you have to know your own limitations. You have to know your limitations. Christianity in America today does not like that. We do not want to have any limitations. We do not want to put any limitations on ourselves. We do not want to put a limitation to the things that we do, and we certainly do not want to hear what is wrong with us. But I will tell you this, you will never get what is wrong with you out of your life until you identify what is wrong with you. You never will.

I look at learning the Word of God the same way. I look at this, like the marriage class, I told you was designed to reveal problems. This Bible study thing we are going to enter into is multi-purposed in its task because it is going to reveal to you very quickly why you have such a tough time getting a hold of the Bible. Now, once it reveals that, it does not mean you are a failure. It just means that now you know better what you have got to work on in your life if you really want to learn the Word of God, that is all.

Now, obviously, it will be just like everything else. When we started the marriage class, we packed it out. I had people sign up back there, all kinds of people signed up. We have been five weeks into it now, and we have lost a bunch of people. I expected that. Do you know why? Because people have a tough time making commitments to things that have to do with God. Some have a tough time making commitments to things in the world. I promise you, I have a message I am going to preach one time that will probably be the defining message in my life. I just do not know when to preach it because I would like to preach it right before I die. I do not want to preach it, and then God say, "Okay, pal, we will do it your way." But it is a great message. It is a simple message based on some things I have learned in the ministry and dealing with people. It is about eight or nine things. I think there probably, if you would sum up what I have learned out of God and the Bible over the 30-some years of teaching and preaching and working with people, I think you can sum it up in these eight or nine things.

To me, they are the most profound things in life. To me, they are what ought to come out of every person's life at the end of their life or somewhere in the process of their life. That is the wisdom that you have learned some things. We as God's people, we go through life, and honestly, very honestly, we do not learn a thing. We do not learn a thing. Do you know how I know that? Because we keep making the same mistakes over and over and over again. We do not learn anything. We do not learn anything. If there is anything that I have learned in the list that I am going to give you, one of them, given any situation in life, no matter where you are at in your spiritual life, God will always get the short end of the stick when it comes to you making a choice, unless you change that.

I will tell you why that is. It is because we are such that God is spiritual. We cannot see, we cannot touch Him. There are lots of things down here on this earth that we can see and we can touch and we can get our hands on. That is what God runs up against. It is a race against the clock in your life and my life against the judgment seat of Christ of who is going to have the preeminence in your life: the spiritual things in God or the physical things in this life. That is the same thing that Adam had to deal with. Adam had two images: one was a spiritual image, one was a physical image. Do you know which one Adam chose? The same one you and I will always choose. In any given situation, I do not care what your spirituality is, the number one thing you have got to watch out for is human nature, and the tendency is to always give God the short stick.

I do not know how many times I have seen it. I have seen a guy or a gal get all excited about the Word of God and want to serve God and say, "Well, I just want to learn the Bible and get everything in the Bible," and they get out and get into the Word of God and get out of the world and get into the Word of God, and it goes for a while. Then suddenly, here comes a little dreamboat gal into your life or Mr. Wonderful in your life that you have not seen for 25, 30 years, or you just bumped into each other, or you get an old phone call out of the past. Do you know what you do? You look at God, you look at her, you look at God, you look at him, you look at God and look at him, you say, "I have got to spend time with God or I have got to spend time with her. I have got to spend time on Bible, I have got to spend time with him." Do you know how it goes? "See you, God." Sometimes you do not even salute. You just say, "See you, God."

That is our number one problem, and this is why in the 20th century, 21st century now, you have a bunch of Christians who claim to be saved, claim to be going to heaven, and if you would ask them what the baptism of John was or any of these baptisms, they would not have a clue. I am telling you, one of the greatest things I have learned about myself, and it is one of my limitations because it is one of yours, is that given any situation in life, when it comes down to God, reading your Bible or watching television, it will be watching television. If it comes down to going out and being with your friends and doing something you want to do versus staying home and sticking out something in the Word of God, "See you, God, I am going here." That is just the way we are.

Now, if you are ever going to be effective for God, you are going to have to overcome that, and the only way you are going to overcome that is for somebody to expose what your weaknesses are. That is what this "how to study the Bible" thing is designed to do. Not in a bad way. It is not going to be, "You are going to have to wear a sign at church: 'This is my problem.'" My point is this: if you do not ever understand who you are in your own self, you cannot fix what is wrong with you. That is just the truth of life. That is what I want to do along with everything else because it is going to take us, all of this, in this class that we are going to do, it is going to take all of this coming up to the next level. It is going to define you this year. You may not finish this class. You may go back and scratch your name off and make it real good and black so I cannot see who it was ever on there. Do you say, "How do you know that?" Because that is what I used to do.

I am going to tell you the bottom line: if you are ever going to grow spiritually, if this church is ever going to grow spiritually, boys and girls, it is time to step up to the next level. Leadership in this church demands it because it just has to go that way. I told you, this year is going to be a defining year. This year, in a lot of ways, is going to separate the men from the boys. Because when you get into this program, you are going to have to make choices. It is going to be very obvious where you are at in these choices, whether it is going to be, "Well, I am going to do this," or "I am going to do this."

Now, I did not say all that to scare you because I want to enact a phase two of this Bible study. I stole this phrase from the President of the United States, but please, they have stolen a lot from us, so let me steal at least one thing from him. I call this, "No child left behind." My dilemma in all of this has been this: I want everybody to do this, but I also know that probably not everybody is ready to do this. I had one lady that has been coming to our church. She is not here this morning; she got a prior commitment or she would have been here. Who initially, when she talked about this, I said, "Well, you know what, you need to get disciplined first." She came to me about six or eight weeks later and she said, "Look, I do not want to miss out on this. I will do whatever I have got to do. I will do whatever I have got to do if you will just let me do this. I do not want to miss out on the ground floor of this." She says, "I know I do not know anything." She said, "I will work hard. I will do whatever I have got to do." I looked at her and I said, "No." Now, how do you say no to that? So I had to rethink my whole deal. Then I heard the President one day, "No child left behind." God said, "That is what you need to do. Leave no child behind." Probably the only message he ever preached that anybody got anything connected with the Bible to it, but I got it.

So I came up with this. I do not care who you are, how young you are in the Lord. I am not going to tell you how I am doing this whole thing yet because we do not have the time, and that is what Saturday night is for. But I want to tell you this, I have made a provision to leave no child behind. If you are a young Christian that just got saved and you do not know squat about the Bible, I am going to create a scenario for you group of people unto yourself. I have got a plan how I am going to do this. All I am saying is this, and I am not getting into the plan because I do not have all the plan nailed down exactly yet, but I am just telling you this: I am not leaving any of you behind. If you want to learn your Bible and you are not at the level where you could get into this, then that is okay. I will fix it for you wherever you are at without getting into it. I will tell you about it Saturday night. If you want to come, fine; if you do not, fine. We will detail it all. But I am saying no one will be left behind in this. Wherever you are at, I will make it work for you if you are willing to take that attitude of that little gal that said, "I will do whatever I have got to do." If you are that willing to do it, then God forbid that I should sin against the Lord and not giving you that opportunity and creating a way for you to do it. I am not going to squelch your zeal. I am just not going to do it. So I am going to read a vamp half of it or part of it for you, because I am not leaving anybody behind that wants to do it. So please be there on time. As you know, we have no babysitter, so you are going to have to take care of that. If you need to get directions to Kelly's back there, do it. I would ask you this, if you have a, we are going to be really packed out that night, and we do not probably have enough chairs. So if you could just do me a favor and you have a lawn chair, and I am not one of these ones that recline out, that you

are going to sleep on. If you have some kind of collapsible chair, just throw it in your car in case we need it. If you just got one, we may not need it. And please do not get mad and leave the church if we do not use it. There are some Christians who say, "Well, I am leaving that going to another church." "Why is that?" "Because I brought my collapsible chair and they did not use it." Just throw it in in case we need it. I am looking forward to this, and I am telling you, this is going to be a great time. Enough said.

II. The Baptism of Jesus' Death: Initial Definition

Now, today we are going to start our third baptism. Again, we are going to see another picture of what the Bible says is one Lord, one faith, one baptism. You remember I told you that there are seven different baptisms in the Bible, but in actuality, there is only one true baptism. The other six are pictures of the true one. What we have done is we have been beginning to show you how to rightly divide your Bible, how to put it into perspective, that we begin to detail these things out. This in itself is a great way for you to learn your Bible. Again, as I said, we will see another picture. In fact, this baptism we are going to study today is the reason that we as Baptists baptize at all.

As Baptists, we immerse in water. We could take you down into a lake someplace, and we put you down and bring you back up. We follow the New Testament concept of immersion. This baptism we are going to look at today is really the reason why we as Baptists baptize the way we do. So a lot of things are going to come together today. A lot of things are going to begin to start to make sense for you as we detail these out.

When the book of Acts was written, the book of Acts really from Acts 7 on anyhow, it really begins to, we can follow the formulation of the church. We know that in Acts 9, the Apostle Paul gets saved. God changes his name from Saul to Paul. At that point, he becomes the apostle to the church. All the books that Paul writes, he writes from Acts 7 to Acts 20. All that he does in there, and you can actually trace the beginning, the inception in Acts 11, where they are first called Christian with the model church, with the church in Antioch, and then you can follow it all the way through. You are going to find when you get all of Paul's materials together and all the books that he writes, that there are two ordinances that the early church is following. These two ordinances are the same two ordinances that we follow today. One of them is the Lord's Supper. The other one is the ordinance of baptism. We follow that pattern all the way through, back all the way through the early church.

I told you last week that we saw the definition of baptism, not last week, the time we were together. I told you in Matthew 3 that baptism always manifests something. In Matthew 3, we were told, and we saw from the book of John, that the baptism of Jesus was a manifestation of Jesus to the nation of Israel. We looked at that. I told you that wherever you find baptism, baptism is always going to manifest something. It does not always manifest the same thing, but it is always a manifestation. You are going to see that today.

Now take your Bibles and turn to Matthew 20. In Matthew 20, pick it up in verse 20.

Matthew 20:20-23 Then came to him the mother of Zebedee's children with her sons, worshipping him, and desiring a certain thing of him. And he said unto her, What wilt thou? She saith unto him, Grant that these my two sons may sit, the one on thy right hand, and the other on thy left, in thy kingdom. But Jesus answered and said, Ye know not what ye ask. Are ye able to drink of the cup that I shall drink of, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with? They say unto him, We are able. And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

Now Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. We pray Lord that You will help us today and put this all together. Help us to take our time to lay it out, to see it, and to put it all in perspective that we can learn from Your Word today as we begin to piece this Bible together. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name for His sake. Amen.

This is the third baptism we are going to study today. This baptism, if you want a title for it, it is called the baptism of Jesus' death. Again, there are some things that we need to see here. The first thing I want you to see and understand is that we have got to get the context here. This baptism of Jesus' death has nothing to do with water. I want you to see that. Do you say, "How do you know that?" Well, because Matthew 20, believe it or not, is, the last one we studied was John's baptism. We studied that in Matthew 3. Now here we are in Matthew 20, and he is talking about somebody being baptized into his death. Yet this is three years after his baptism in Matthew 3. There is no water here. This baptism of Jesus' death has absolutely nothing to do with water in the sense that it applies to you and I.

If you do not know your Bible, if you do not know how to define out these seven baptisms, you get into here as some religions do. Boy, you take this thing, and the next thing you know, you are going to make this thing, you know, you get into Jesus' death by getting baptized in water. Nobody is being baptized in water here. This baptism was the baptism of John, which was another whole baptism three years earlier. In fact, he is now at the end of his ministry. In the next two chapters, he is going to give the final discourse before he goes to the cross. He is on his way to Calvary.

Here is the situation. Mom comes in and wants her boys to sit on the right and the left in the kingdom. What kingdom is that? Kingdom of Heaven, that is right. She wants them to sit in the literal, visible Kingdom when Christ comes back, and she wants one boy on one side and one boy on the other side, as any mother would. Now I want you to notice his answer. He answers her in two different answers. First of all, he asks the question, "Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink of?" The second question is, "Are you able to be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with?"

Let us talk about the cup for a second. He asked them a question, "Are you able to drink of the cup that he drinks with?" This cup here in your Bible is a reference to Christ's physical death. I am going to save you a little time this morning because you have all been good people this week, and I want to give you a little something here. So I will save you a little time. There are two cups in your Bible. One of them will be the cup of God's wrath. You will find that in John 18:11. This

is the cup that when he is in the Garden of Gethsemane, if you remember that story, he is saying, "My Father, if it be thy will, let this cup pass from me." That cup that he is praying for there, to pass from him, if it would be the Father's will, was the cup of God's wrath and indignation that was going to fall on him. This is the same cup you find in the book of Revelation being poured out on the earth during the tribulation period. It will be the cup of God's wrath. In the Bible, it is called "my Father's cup."

Then there is a second cup in the Bible, and the second cup in the Bible will be the physical death of Christ on the cross. That cup will be called "my cup." You will find that the cup that he drinks here that he is talking about, that he says, "Are you able to drink of the cup that I drink," is a reference to his physical death on the cross, his crucifixion. You know that from Matthew 20:18, because Matthew 20:18 in that chapter says, "The Son of man shall be betrayed unto the chief priests and unto the scribes, and they shall condemn him to death." In Matthew 20:18, we have the definition of that cup; it is his death. If that was not enough, in Matthew 26:27, after the resurrection, when he is sitting at the table there, he says this: "And he took the cup, and gave thanks, and gave it to them, saying, Drink ye all of it; For this is my blood of the new testament, which is shed for many for the remission of sins." This cup here in Matthew 20 is Jesus's cup. It is a reference to his physical death on the cross. It is not a reference to the Father's cup, which is the cup of God's wrath being poured out on him. This cup is the cup of his physical death.

III. Old Testament Imagery of Death and Suffering

Now, in connection with this cup, and all this represents a picture of something, the next thing that he talks about, and that is the baptism of his death. I do not know what you know about the Bible, but I am going to teach you some things today that will help you next time you read through the Bible, especially the Old Testament. I do not know if you have made this observation or not. As you come through the Bible, and all through the Old Testament, you are going to find in the Psalmist and the Old Testament writers, when they talk about suffering, physical suffering, when they talk about death, literal death, when they talk about great affliction and some great trial that somebody goes through, have you ever noticed how it is always a reference in the Bible, in the book of Psalms and all these places? It is always made a reference to like the suffering and the agonizing and the great affliction and the death. It is always likened to you being overflowed with great waters. Have you ever seen that?

Have you ever read 2 Samuel 22:5? Have you ever read Psalms 88:7? Have you ever read Psalms 88:9? Psalms 36:6? Psalms 42:7? All show him talking about somebody physically dying, like they are being overflowed, overflowed with flood waters. The great deep, it is kind of like standing on the shore and watching some great tidal wave. One of the movies that I, I did not care for the movie, it was one scene in it that I really liked because I always liked things that kind of give me a little idea of how big God is and how small we are. But it was Deep Impact. Remember that movie about the, whatever was going to hit the earth? Everybody is trying to get out of the way, and finally this gal, she goes back and she finds her dad who she had been estranged from. They live on the beach, and this thing is going to hit out in the ocean, and it is going to put a tidal wave, 600 miles high, and it is just going to come. I mean, the water is going

to come all the way into Kansas. That is how big it is; it is a disaster. It is not like, "Hey honey, the bathtub is overflowing." This thing is a mess. The most impressive part of that thing to me was that scene where it kind of backed up and it showed that little girl, or what was the girl, she was an adult, and her dad standing on the beach waiting for the final thing to come. All of a sudden it backed off, and you saw this gigantic, absolute, humongous tidal wave coming in. It happened fast, but you could not get the message of how small they were and how big that wave was. In a moment of time, that thing just covered them, and they were gone. In your Bible, that is what physical death is likened to. It is likened to the great waters or the great billows of the deep overcoming you. It is all through the Bible.

Do you ever read the book of Jonah? In Jonah 2, Jonah dies. He dies, physically he dies. I have to laugh at some of the stupidest Baptist preachers in the world today. Do you know how the devil works? Here is how the devil works: he has so absolutely got at work when it comes to unsaved people. You know the book of Jonah represents the resurrection of Christ? That is what it represents. Now, the unsaved preachers, scholars, educators, they always want to attack the deity of Christ and the resurrection of Christ. So you know what they say? They tell you that the book of Jonah is a fable. If you watch the History Channel, or you watch the National Geographic Channel, or you watch any of those informational channels, educational channels, and I use the word loosely, sooner or later you will find a story comes on about the great myths of the Bible. One of the myths of the Bible will be portrayed as Jonah being swallowed by the whale. They will tell you the story of Jonah, like the story of Adam and Eve, like the story of Sodom and Gomorrah, has been twisted and it never happened. It is folklore; it is not true. It is primeval man coming up with concepts, fearing his deity and writing all these things down to scare everybody else. Of course, that is simply not true. But the unsaved liberals, the unsaved preachers, they take the position that Jonah, the book of Jonah, is a fable.

Now, I will show you how the devil works. We come over to the saved people's side. You are the saved people, they are the unsaved people. So here is what you have got. They look at the book of Jonah and they say, "Oh no, the book of Jonah is true." To counteract what the liberals are saying that it did not exist, you know what they do? They spend all of their time trying to find proof positive that it was an absolute fact because the liberals have a problem with the fact that how could anybody live for three days and three nights in the whale's belly? So what the Baptists do, the Bible-believing group do, they run to the other side and they try to find recordings down through history. Believe it or not, in 1885, there was a British seaman that fell off a whaling vessel. They were hunting whales, and he got swallowed by a giant sperm whale. They caught this whale two days later or three days later and began to harvest his blubber, which sounds like most Baptist fundamental preachers I know. They began to cut this whale open, and lo and behold, this British guy fell out, and he was still alive. Now, the acid from the whale's stomach had made his skin white, lost all his pigmentation. His hair was gone, it is not all, but he was still alive. So the Baptist crowd run around now saying, "See, it is possible, it is possible, it is possible."

Now this thing works. You have got this crowd over here, and the devil gives them the idea that Jonah is a fable. You have got the saved people, they are supposed to be saved. We will say they

are. They say, "Oh no, no, it is true because we found an account in history where somebody actually did live, and you were wrong because we now have an account that somebody can live in the belly of a whale for three days." Now, let me tell you something. The attack in both cases is against the resurrection. They are attacking the resurrection by saying it did not happen. The Baptists run to the defense and they say, "Well, we are going to defend it." No, the Baptists and the saved people, if you take the position that Jonah lived and was alive in the whale's belly for three days, you have taken the same position that they did. Because then what you are telling me is that Christ never died for three days and three nights. If Christ did not die literally for three days and three nights, then you and I are not saved. Do you see how the devil gets it done?

I have some terrible news for you, doctor. Jonah went down in that. You do not have to worry about finding a British story and a seaman that lived for three days. He died in that whale. He died in that whale. Jonah died in that whale. Just like the guy in Jaws. You know when he eats him at the end of the movie? He got eaten and he got swallowed up, and he died. Do you say, "How do you know that?" I have got a book called the Bible. He died and then he resurrected. The Bible says in Matthew 12:40 that the only sign of the resurrection that the nation of Israel was going to get, that Christ was going to come down and die and then resurrect three days later, was the sign of Jonah. Now, if Jonah did not die, it cannot be a sign that Christ died. Jonah died. At the end of three days, the whale came up and said, "I do not know about that." He came out. He got resurrected just like Christ came out of the tomb.

I like this. I like the way God puts himself in the position. If you men are making an attack against the Bible, you have got to make it against Him personally. Do you know what does not say whale in Jonah? Have you ever noticed that? If you try to find the word "whale" in Jonah, it says that God prepared a great fish. So everybody runs around saying, "Well, it does not say it was a whale." Do you know what Jesus himself did in Matthew 12:40? Jesus himself said it was a whale. So Jesus set it up that if you are going to call somebody a liar, it is Him personally. I love it. I love the Bible. I love that book.

Now in Jonah 2, let me show you what you have got. You have got Jonah dying. I want to read it in Jonah 2:1.

Jonah 2:1-7 Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice. For thou hadst cast me into the deep, in the midst of the seas; and the floods compassed me about: all thy billows and thy waves passed over me. Then I said, I am cast out of thy sight; yet I will look again toward thy holy temple. The waters compassed me about, even to the soul: the depth closed me round about, the weeds were wrapped about my head. I went down to the bottoms of the mountains; the earth with her bars was about me for ever: yet hast thou brought up my life from corruption, O LORD my God. When my soul fainted within me I remembered the LORD: and my prayer came in unto thee, into thine holy temple.

He died physically. Do you see what that physical death is likened to? It is likened to the great waters of the deep, compassionate, great waves overflowing him. All of that is a picture of in the Bible, the great suffering and the death.

In Psalm 69:1-4, it says this: Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me. I am weary of my crying: my throat is dried: mine eyes fail while I wait for my God. They that hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of mine head: they that would destroy me, being mine enemies wrongfully, are mighty: then I restored that which I took not away.

Do you see that thing? He is talking about worrying about dying and likening the physical death to the deep mire, to the water, to the depth.

Job in Job 30:9-15, he says this:

And now am I their song, yea, I am their byword. They abhor me, they flee far from me, and spare not to spit in my face. Because he hath loosed my cord, and afflicted me, they have also let loose the bridle before me. Upon my right hand rise the youth; they push away my feet, and they raise up against me the ways of their destruction. They mar my path, they set forward my calamity, they have no helper. They came upon me as a wide breaking in of waters: in the desolation they rolled themselves upon me.

Do you see that picture? All through your Old Testament, physical death is likened to somebody being rolled over with great waves, being swallowed up by the great deep. They are all a reference to physical death.

IV. Historical and Doctrinal Understanding of "Going Under"

You know, back in the 1700s, 1800s, people had a much more perspective on the Word of God than we have got today. When somebody, and you know what they called it? They said, "He went under." He went under. That is where you got the word "undertaker." Somebody is saying, "Do you hear what happened to old Joe?" "Do you know what happened?" "He went under." Under what? Under the water, under the waves, under the billows, under the deep, died physically. Those people back there orchestrated their whole life, even the things they connected with, back to the Word of God. We do not do that today.

I have told you this before in our hymnal, that little red book you have got there called Great Hymns of the Faith. I told you about how they are Philadelphia songs at the Philadelphia Church Age. You are going to find, when you start to go through those songs, you are going to find this doctrine, just like all the other great doctrines, are so clearly taught. The songwriters understood what was going on, and they understood the Bible to a greater way that the average Christian today does not even comprehend it. I watched some of God's people sometime over the years when they sing these great songs, and you know what? Some of them like to sing them, some of them enjoy them, and they would not sing anything else, but you know what? They have not got a clue what the songwriters had doctrinally in those songs. Not a clue, not a clue.

I mean, we sing the great song in page 510, "Shall we gather at the river where bright angels feet have trod?" They do not even know what river he is talking about. They would not have a clue where that bright angels' feet touched. That is Joshua 5. They do not have a clue who that angel

is. They have no idea where his shining feet touched and what river it was, and somebody had to go under that river to get across the other side. They knew it. We sing this great song in 517, "On Jordan stormy banks, I stand and cast a wistful eye to Canaan fair and happy land where my possessions lie." You see, the thing is, you are on this side of Jordan, and heaven is the other side of Jordan, but you have got to go under the deep to get there, physical death. They knew it. Every unsaved man back there, whether he believed God in the Bible or not, in the 1700s, 1800s, when somebody said, "What happened to old Ralph?" "He went under."

Page 515 talks about the great song, "Beulah Land." It says, "I look the way across the sea where mansions are prepared for me and view the shining glorious shore, my heaven, my house forevermore." We sing that. Anybody in here know what Beulah Land means? Anybody here want to take a stab at what Beulah means? It is only in your Bible one time. You see, we sing it. We sing the songs like we read our Bible. We really do not understand what we are doing. We think today in Christianity that singing songs about God without understanding the doctrine in the song is okay. Do you know why? Because all of our music has no doctrine in it. So now we come to the Bible, and we read the Bible without getting out of it because all the new Bibles have no doctrine in them. Do you see how it works?

Now these old boys knew something. They knew that that river and those billows and those waves represented physical death. They knew that when I passed from this side of the shore over to the other side of the shore, we have got to go under that water. In page 516, "I'm Coming Home," it says, "Let others seek a house below which flames devour and waves overflow. Be mine a happy lot to own a heavenly mansion just near his throne." You see, the waves overflowing.

I do not know if you know it or not, but back in 1912, on April 14th, one of the great disasters that followed this country and the country of England that we still talk about today, was the great sinking of the Titanic. The sinking of the Titanic has always intrigued me, as many things in history that I have looked at over the years. I look at that thing, and there are two men that come out of the sinking of the Titanic. I have tried to research both of them. One of them is easy to research. The other one was a dead end street. But it is the one that I could not find that really intrigued me. You can go so far, and then it just, there is nothing about it.

I will tell you the first guy that I really, is the first interesting guy, is a Scotch evangelist by the name of John Harper. John Harper was coming to the United States of America to hold a great revival meeting, and he was coming over on the Titanic. John Harper never made it to America. John Harper died in the icy waters of the North Atlantic. He was one of the many, many men and women and children that lost their life that night in the dark, cold Atlantic Ocean. But witnesses have testified, one man in particular, that old John Harper never got into a lifeboat. One guy testified to the fact that when that ship went down and 1,500 people were thrown into the icy North Atlantic, when the water was about 32 degrees and you died in about 15 minutes, that he was flailing around and trying to find something. He said everybody was panicking, and everybody was crying, and everybody was screaming, and he was trying to grab a hold on a piece of wood. He was later pulled out and put into a lifeboat. He said the waves were coming up and down, that ship had just went down, and it was pitch black. He said those waves are rolling

up and down, and I was crying, I was screaming. I said, "By God, somebody help me! What are we to do? What are we to do?" That witness that survived that great tragedy said he heard cutting through that darkness in a thick Scottish brogue, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house." John Harper did not make it to America. He drowned out there in the North Atlantic. But you know what John Harper realized? He realized something that probably most of us could not have grasped. He was quick enough to understand that John thought his revival was going to be in America. God changed it and said, "No, it is going to be in the icy North Atlantic as you go down for the last time." He is my first guy; I love John Harper.

Who the other guy is, is a guy by the name of Wallace Hartley. Wallace Hartley was the chief violin player on the Titanic, and he led the band. When the ship first hit the iceberg, nobody thought it was going to sink because everybody had said this ship is virtually unsinkable. In fact, the thing in the newspapers was that now we had come to such a state in shipbuilding, she had 16 compartments that were watertight, and she could do what no other ship could do. She could stay afloat with four compartments completely flooded, and even though she could not go on, it was decided that she could become her own lifeboat, and she virtually could not sink. In fact, they were so sure of that, you know what they both did in the New York Times and the London Times? They said, "This is a ship that God himself could not sink." First mistake you made.

So when they hit the iceberg, honest to goodness, pieces of ice fell on the deck, and people are actually playing ice hockey with the ice cubes. They are coming up on side and looking at the thing, and they did not even feel it. It was just like a shudder when she ran up along that iceberg. There were no emergency sirens going off. It was just like a little tremble, and the ship stopped, and people came up and said, "Oh, I am going back to bed. This is nothing," and back to bed they went. Little did they know in two and a half hours that ship was going to go down. To calm the passengers, Wallace Hartley got his little band together out there on the deck, and they are playing joyous little songs, a couple violins, a couple cellos, and they are playing the songs of the time. Deep down inside, the water was rushing in, and whoever designed the ship was a little dumber than God because they took the bulkheads up only so far and did not take them all the way to the ceiling. So the water went up and poured over to the next one, went up, poured over to the next one, went up, poured over to the next one, and pretty soon she started to list down this way, and pretty soon she started to list a little farther this way. That night at 2:30 a.m. in the morning, that great ship that was unsinkable, that God himself could not sink, slid beneath those waves and plunged two and a half miles into the deep, dark North Atlantic.

Out of all the people on that, 750 people, you know what the witnesses say? The witnesses say that when that thing, as the lights flickered out and the people were screaming and they were still on that thing and that ship began to lean up and everybody knew that the unsinkable ship was going to sink, Wallace Hartley and his little group of people stood on the rear end of that ship and played till the ship went down. Witnesses said over the chaos and the destruction and the death, you could hear the sweet sound of the violins and the cellos playing this song: "Abide with me; fast falls the eventide; the darkness deepens; Lord with me abide."

The thing that fascinates me about this guy, I do not know if he was saved or he was lost, but he certainly picked the appropriate song for the time that they were in. "Abide with me, abide with

me. Fast falls the eventide, the darkness deepens." I am telling you what, that night was as black, no moon, as could be, and the depths were two and a half miles down. At 2:30 in the morning, that ship slipped down there, and 1,500 people went out into eternity. I am telling you what, I would like to know about this Hartley guy if he was a saved man or not because he sure knew what song, if he was not saved, oh, God help us. I hate to even say this, if he was a lost man, you know what it tells me? It tells me that in 1912, a lost man knew more about the doctrines of the Bible than you do as a Christian and I was a Christian today in 2006. He is probably going to die and bust hell wide open. Now, if that does not bother you, I do not know what to do for you. If something like that, when I caught that and I saw that, I did not feel good for two days. I did everything I could find to find out about these guys. I will tell you what I did find out, him and the band got held up as heroes, and after it all was over and all the stories were reconciled, everybody gave credit to Hartley and his little band for staying there faithful and giving those people the stability that they needed through the song that they played in that face of that great disaster. The last song he played fit doctrinally, absolutely completely with what was happening, which the Old Testament described: they were going to die, and they were going down in the deep. Here is a chance where an unsaved man in 1912 who probably is burning in hell right now and has been for 70 years, knew more Bible doctrine than the child of God does today in the average church because we do not even know what I am talking about today. We wonder why we have problems in our lives.

In page 256, that great song, "It Is Well With My Soul," says: "When peace, like a river, attendeth my way, when sorrows like sea billows roll; whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say, It is well, it is well with my soul." The waters every time you find it in the Old Testament has to do with waves crashing over and our physical death having come into the place where it just overwhelms us and we go under through that great affliction. So this baptism of Jesus' death now, based on what we have defined in the Bible, we know that it has to deal also with his physical death as the cup does and Christ dying on the cross. In fact, whether you know it or not, the three verses I gave you that I read to you are all pictures of Christ dying on the cross. Psalm 69, Job 30, and Jonah 2, all pictures of Christ dying on the cross. I know you knew that. So what you have got here is a picture that he is talking about when he says, "Are you able to drink the cup," physical death, "and be baptized," he is talking about Christ, you dying physically and the waters coming over you.

Look what Christ says in Matthew 20:23:

And he saith unto them, Ye shall drink indeed of my cup, and be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with: but to sit on my right hand, and on my left, is not mine to give, but it shall be given to them for whom it is prepared of my Father.

You know what happens in time? Both James in Acts 12 and John in the Isle of Patmos in 90 AD, both of them are martyred. They both drink of the same cup of physical death, and they both get the same baptism. They both die physical death as martyrs like Christ did. No question about this.

V. The Believer's Baptism into Christ's Death (Romans 6)

Now, I want to take what I just gave you, I want to show you how this applies to your life and my life as a Christian. I want to take your Bibles and turn to Romans 6. I am about to lay out for you one of the greatest doctrines in all the Bible of figuring this thing out, which is the key to a lot of things. Some of you have heard it before, some of you have not. That is okay, do not worry about it. I will take the time and explain it to you. Romans 6. I will show you how this applies to you and me as a New Testament Christian.

Romans 6:1-4 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that grace may abound? God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein? Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death? Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

Now, let us stop right there for a minute. You know what that verse says? That says that not only were the two boys back here baptized into Jesus' death, you and I, the day we got in Christ, we were baptized into his death. Now there is the kicker. That is what we have got to decide. That is what we have got to figure out. That is what we have got to get into in the Bible doctrine and figure out what that means. Because now it is widened. Not only were these two boys back there, he said, not only are they going to be baptized, we know it is physical death now, now he is saying, he is saying here, he is saying, "Know ye not that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death."

Romans 6:4-5 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

Now, if you did not know what I have been teaching you in the last couple of weeks, if you did not know that there were seven baptisms and six of them picture the one true baptism, it would have nothing to do with it. If you did not know that, I promise you, if you did not know how to rightly divide your Bible, if you did not have somebody systematically showing you how to do this, which is what my job is, you would think, "Well, wow, water baptism puts me into Christ then," because that is what it looks like.

Now there is a church out there, there is a number of churches, but I want to talk about one in particular. This is called the Church of Christ. Sometimes they are called the Campbellites. They are called the Campbellites because in the early part of the 1800s, they started to follow a guy by the name of Campbell who got disgruntled with an organized church and started his own religion which became the Church of Christ. Sometimes they are called Campbellites. I call them water dogs. They believe there is power in the tub, but there is not power in the blood. They believe that Romans 6 teaches you that you get saved when you get baptized.

Now I pinned one of these old boys down one time because they are pretty slippery and pretty slimy. I think that they hate baptism with a passion. I used to, I got a whole, I used to get their newspapers and I used to read them all the time because they had a lot of insight in some of the stupidity that they hold onto and why they hate us so bad. They are probably one of the most

demon-possessed groups that you are ever going to get into or hang out with. I remember one time I pinned an old boy down, and I did not let him go until he gave me the answer that I wanted. I wanted to hear the truth. I put that old boy down, and I said, "Okay, you think Romans 6 is water?" And he said, "That is right." And I said, "You think you have got to get baptized to go to heaven?" I said, "That is right." And I said, "Then I want you to explain to me because you do not just believe baptism, because in my Baptist church, if I baptized somebody and I said, 'Okay, folks, we are all going to believe that baptism saves you now and we are going to start back in that way,' you would not think that any of my folks that got baptized would go to heaven, would you?" He said, "No." "How about the Methodist church?" "No." "How about the Catholic church?" "No." In other words, the only people who can be saved are people who get baptized in a Church of Christ baptism. Nothing else will work.

Now I pressed the old boy on that because I wanted to find out how far they were going to take that. Do you know what he told me at the end of the day? After I worked him over five or six times, about three hours, you know what he finally confessed to me? Here is what he confessed. He finally, I pinned him down and would not let him squirm and would not let him jump to another subject, and just held his feet to the fire. He told me that the blood of Jesus Christ gets applied to your sin through the public water system that comes into a Campbellite baptismal; it comes into no other baptismal. That through their religion, being the true religion, God injects the blood of Christ through their water system that washes your sins away. I just looked at him, and he told me that. I said, "You know what? You have got to be the most insane person I have ever met in my life if you believe that. That is the absolute most ridiculous thing that I have ever heard in my life. That is ludicrous."

Now, let me get it to you where it really is here. Romans 6, here is what it says. I read it already. Here is what you have got. Do you know what you have got in the book of Romans? You have got the book where Paul begins to define all the doctrine for the church. If you study the book of Romans, you will find that in the first five chapters of Romans, he kind of deals with all the issues and everything. Then what happens when you get into Romans 6? Here is what he does. In Romans 6, he starts to show you that Christ's death on the cross, his physical death on the cross, Christ's death on the cross, his physical dying and death on the cross, when you get that death applied to your life, that you now are dead to everything in this world, but you are alive in Christ. Romans 6 has one thing to do with water. When you start to come through chapter six, the first chapter you find here is where he explains that when you got saved, Christ took his death and puts you in that death. Then chapter seven, as you go on down through the rest of the book, he tells you in every chapter, because now you are dead in Christ, you do not have to be affected by anything out there in the world. You are dead to the world. These are the great verses that we talk about in Galatians 2:20. Maybe now they will make sense to you. "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me." See, I am alive, but I am dead. The reason why I am dead is because his death got applied to my sin, and I am dead in that physical death. He took his physical death and applied it to my sin. So now I am alive in Christ; I am dead to the world.

Now we are going to talk about that in a little bit. I just want to hold up there, and I want to take this thing a little bit farther. Now let me show you how this thing works. Let me tell you why it is called the baptism of Jesus' death. Now here is my little thing up here. This is a failed attempt, but please understand what I am dealing with here. This is a picture. I do not understand how this thing did, this is not the shape, I am just using this for an illustration. I thought it would be better if I gave you some illustration, other than just laying it out, so this is just a, please do not go out of here, this is nothing but an illustration. But let us say for instance, this from here to here, this is the universe. All this is the universe. In this here are galaxies by the millions, by the billions, by the trillions, planets, comets, our solar system. This thing here represents all outer space, which we commonly will call eternity. Now, please do not ask me what is outside here, or I am going to tell you the rest of the wall. It is an illustration. I am not suggesting you that eternity is a square box. I just did not have enough space to lay it out the way it really is. So you humor me. This up here, that is God's throne. This here, that is planet Earth. So now you have got to get a little example here.

Now with that in mind, turn over your Bibles to Genesis 1:1. Now I want to show you something here, I am going to show you a great doctrine in your Bible. Genesis 1. I do not know if you know this or not, and maybe you do if you have been around for a while, and this is not a scary thing, it is a doctrinal thing. The Bible says there are three heavens. Now traditionally, because we are Baptists in our thinking and we are victims of all the mundane stuff that we have been taught all our life, we immediately think of heaven as one place. A place where everybody floats on clouds. A place when you get there, you get a special suit robe with wings attached. Then after you get there, you get your robe, you get your wings, you head down to the harp depot and you get your harp. Then you get a cloud that you are assigned to, and for all eternity, you float and pluck. And you sing praises to God. Well, let me define it for you from the Bible. The word "heaven" in the Bible simply means firmament. It means a space. It never refers to the cloudy, flippily, harpy thing that we all think of. I am sorry. When Paul got caught up to see his vision in the book of Corinthians, Paul himself says he was caught up to the third heaven. There are three; they are listed for you in Psalms. We do not have time to do that. But let me tell you what they are.

- First heaven would be our atmosphere. That is where the birds fly.
- Second heaven would be outer space itself. That is where all the planets and the constellations and everything are.
- Third heaven is where God's throne is.

So when Paul says he was caught up to the third heaven, he is caught from here up to there and stands before a throne at the third heaven. Now that is an illustration. Now I want to show you what we have got here.

*Genesis 1:1-2*In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth.And the earth was without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters.

There it is, water. You have got water. Now here is what you have got. I do not have time to get into it this morning, but I will just show you all the details. If you want to detail it out on Thursday night, that will be fine. But here is what you have got. You have got all of this stuff happening here where in the original rebellion back here, when Satan tried to lead the revolt against God, what God does is he drowns this whole second heaven out with water, and the earth is gone too. You find all this in the New Testament. The whole thing is drowned out by water. It is submerged. It is gone. It is drowned out in water. That is what you have in Genesis 1:1-2. In the beginning, God created heaven and earth, perfect. Verse two, we have a gap between it. Satan overthrows God, tries to, and the earth was without form and void, and darkness upon the face of the deep, there is the water. And then the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the water. So this whole thing is now drowned out in Genesis 1:2.

What happens from verse two through the rest of your chapter one is that God now begins to divide it. Look at Genesis 1:3-6:

And God said, Let there be light: and there was light. And God saw the light, that it was good: and God divided the light from the darkness. And God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And the evening and the morning were the first day. And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.

Do you see that thing? You know what God did? It says he divided the waters from the water. Then God said, "Okay, this whole thing is drowned out with water," and the Bible says he made a firmament. So he divided the, he did one or two things. He pushed all the water up, or he divided it, and he pushed water up and he pushed water down. But however it is, all through your Bible, you will find out right now that at the top of this second heaven, going into the third heaven, there is a large body of water called the deep. You will find references to it all through the Bible. You will find that in Job 38:30, that it tells you that the top of that deep is frozen. When John sees that, when he is caught up to the throne of God, he calls it a sea of glass. Frozen. Job 37:18 says the deep is a molten looking glass. It is frozen at the top. Job 26:7-14 says that God blocks the light. Have you ever noticed when you dive deep, the deeper you go, the darker it gets? When they dived on the Titanic, two and a half miles down, they could not see a thing. They have that light because the water filters out. When you just swim in a swimming pool, you can see it, but if you go down 100 feet, it gets pretty dark. You get down 200 feet, it is getting darker. You get down 300, 400, 500 feet, it is pitch black. The water blocks the light. You know what the Bible says over here in Job 26:7-14? It says that if it was not for this water up here, the light of God's throne would cover everything, and there would be no night. You would not have, it would be so bright. You see the water, the deep at the top right now is filtering out the light from God's throne. That is why we have day and night. Bible lays all this out.

Here is the concept of the baptism of Jesus' death, and it is built around this great doctrine. He is sitting up here on the right hand of God the throne, Jesus, first coming of Christ, he leaves that throne, comes down through that water to planet earth. He suffers, he agonizes under the billows and the raging waves of that deep. He dies, he is buried for three days like Jonah under the billows and under the waves. He is under the billows and the waves in physical death, and he resurrects the third day, and then in time, he goes back up through that water and sits at the right

hand of the throne of God forevermore. The baptism of Jesus' death is you and I recognizing that he left that throne, came down through that water, died, and then went back up through that water. So when I baptize you, biblically and scripturally, I stand you up, I ask you if you are saved, then I take you and I say, "Buried in the likeness of Jesus' death," down you go, "raised in the likeness of his glorious resurrection," up you come. That is the baptism of Jesus' death, that because he left that throne, came down through that water physically, died on planet earth physically, and then went back up through that water physically and sat down the throne of God physically, that when you and I trust his death on Calvary's cross, he takes that death through that baptism and applies it to your life and to my life and to our sin debt. That is what you have got. The baptism of Jesus' death as he came down through that water, he died, and he went back up through that water. When Christ leaves the throne, he comes down through the depths of water, he suffers, Old Testament passages, he resurrects from the dead, he goes back up through that water victorious, and he sits on the right hand of God.

Remember now, baptism manifests. Here I come. A 19-year-old kid, dead in my sin, on my way to hell. I need somebody to die and pay for my sin debt, but who? Someday, one day I went to church, and I heard the story of Christ. I heard him sing the song, how that he died in all the great songs of the death and the agonizing and the suffering, and he died and suffered for me. Somebody said, if I will accept his death on the cross and the shedding his blood and trust him as my savior, he will apply his death and the shedding his blood to my sin debt. He will set me free from the bondage of sin. When I did that, I was spiritually baptized into that death. His literal physical death of leaving the throne, coming down through that water, dying and going back up again, set the stage that now that I have been born again, that death has been applied to my dead spiritual condition, and now I am alive in Christ, but I am dead to this world.

Later on, when I understand that I have been saved, the next thing I want to do is I want to get baptized. Why? To be saved? No, I am already saved. Baptism always manifests something. So when I got baptized, I was publicly expressing to everybody there, outwardly, what has happened to me inwardly. Just as he came down as the Bible says in Romans 6 and was buried in the likeness of his death and raised in the likeness, that is what happened to me. When I stand there before men confessing him and the preacher put me down under the water and brought me up, I was publicly confessing and manifesting to the world that that death has happened to me and my sins are paid for, and I am free because I now spiritually have been baptized into his death. This water baptism here is showing you outwardly what has happened to me inwardly. Baptism is like a wedding ring. The fact that you do not wear one does not not make you married. It just shows that you are. Baptism has nothing to do with your salvation. Nothing at all.

The Bible says, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Romans 6:6-7 says this:

Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

VI. Reckoning Ourselves Dead to Sin

Now, I have some great news for you. Because if you are saved and you have experienced him and baptized into the baptism of his death, by that I mean, you took that physical leaving of the throne, coming down and dying and going back up, and you asked him to apply that to your sins when you got saved. You are now spiritually baptized into the baptism of his death. In other words, he died for you. When you apply that to your life, you are no longer half to sin. You know that. You know the Bible says in Romans 6 that once you get saved, sin has no more dominion over you. You do not have to sin. We choose to sin. But God has made a way that once you get saved, we do not have to sin because we are dead to the world and we are alive in Christ. That is why he said down in Romans 6 that we have to reckon ourselves dead to this world.

You know what your problem is and my problem is? We do not reckon it. Do you know why you do not reckon it? Because you do not understand this great doctrine. You think you have to sin. You think that you do not have any choice. Let me tell you something. We have two organizations, and I am not fighting them. One of them is Alcoholics Anonymous. The other one is Narcotics Anonymous. There are all kinds of groups like that that help people have substance abuse problems. I am all for it. This is not a criticism, not in any way, shape or form. I am not criticizing it. I am just telling you. Both of them do good, and they help. But you know what the bottom line is? Both of them, an Alcoholics Anonymous will tell you, you can't ever stop thinking you are an alcoholic. Because in their reasoning, the moment you forget you are an alcoholic, you will start to drink again. Now that sounds like good reasoning. So you always want to remember that I do not care if you have been, I have heard him say it. My father-in-law was a drunk in his life, early part of his life. He went to Alcoholics Anonymous. How many years? 30, 40 years, never had a drink. He turned his whole life around. He would tell you, and he would still go to AA meetings, not because he had a problem with drinking. He would not touch the stuff. But he would go to help other people, and he would always say, "You know what, I have not had a drink for 40 years. I am still an alcoholic." Because that is how they function.

Now let me just tell you, that is the opposite of the Bible. Once you get saved, you will never truly get over being an alcoholic, or drug abuse, or whatever the case, until you recognize that once you got saved, you are no longer those things. You have the power within you now, where you did not have. You see, an alcoholic has to do that in AA and NA, because they do not have God's power in getting them out of it. So they have got to use man-made power. When you get truly saved, God says, "I have forgiven you for all your sin. You may have been an alcoholic, you are not an alcoholic anymore, you have been set free from sin." I have got news for you, Bob, not only are you not an alcoholic anymore, you are nothing anymore, unless you choose to be. So I have a choice in my life. Life is about choices. I choose then to sin, because I give God the short stick, or I choose now to live my life in Christ Jesus, recognizing that I am crucified. This is what the Bible means when it says, "I die daily." Every morning you get up, and you are tempted, you look at it square in the eye and say, "I do not have to do that, I have been set free from sin." The Bible says you have to reckon yourself dead.

I will tell you a story. You go down here to one of the funeral homes next week, and they are having a funeral. You walk up to the casket, you and a couple of your friends look down at the body down in there, and you say, "Well, this is Ralph Schwartz." Somebody would say, "You

know what? I never had the guts to tell Ralph this, but I never liked Ralph." Somebody else said, "You know, Ralph, Ralph was the ugliest guy I ever met in my life." Somebody else said, "You know how you knew Ralph was always lying?" "No, how?" "His mouth moved." Somebody else said, "Ralph has the biggest, ugliest ears I have ever seen in my life. He looked like an elephant running down, catching the wind in his ears, man." Do you know what? Does Ralph care? Does Ralph raise up and say, "Well, you did not talk about me that way?" Does Ralph get angry? Does Ralph raise up and say, "Well, let me tell you what I know about you, pal." Do you know why Ralph does not respond? Do you know why Ralph does not take revenge? Do you know why Ralph does not come up and justify himself? Ralph is a dead man. Dead men do not care what people say about them. Are you getting my drift? Do you know how you get along in this world as a child of God when all the world is against you? You are dead. When you are dead, you do not care what the world says about you. You are dead! But you are alive unto God. You know what you worry about? You do not care what the world thinks about you. You care what God thinks about you. Your whole life, you now reckon yourself the fact that you are dead.

He says in Romans 6:4:

Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life.

That is the spiritual him taking his death and coming down through that water and dying and rising up again and doing what no man did and applying it to your sin and my sin.

Romans 6:5-7 For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection: Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. For he that is dead is freed from sin.

Brother, when I took that baptism of death, God took every sin I had and he nailed it on that cross. He made me a new creature in Christ Jesus. He gave me the power that I never had before, the power to live above sin. Why? Because I am just like Ralph Schwartz. You could parade every Playboy centerfold past Ralph Schwartz in that casket, and he would not look twice. He would not look once. You could put every bottle of booze, every drug there was. You could put every enticement, everything that this world has and pile it up and throw it in the casket and close the lid and put him in the ground. If you opened it 50 years later, it would still be where you left it. Do you know why? Those things do not matter anymore. He is dead. He does not matter anymore. He is dead. The only victory we have as a child of God in our lives is to reckon ourselves dead because we have been baptized into his death. Because he suffered in the agony, I do not have to. He took my ungodliness and my sin, and he nailed it to his Son, and now says, "I do not have to be into the dominion of sin anymore, unless I choose to."

That is why we baptize the way we do. It is not to save you. It is not to give you any second revelation or the power or the grace of God. It is to publicly manifest to a world that I am going down and coming up because there was a day in my life when my savior came down off that throne, went down through that water, died and was buried, went back up through that water. I changed my life the day I trusted him. Now I am not under the bondage of sin anymore. I have

the ability to live above the circumstances of life because I am dead just like Ralph Schwartz. So say what you want to say. Do what you want to do. I am dead.

We do not reckon ourselves dead because this is not taught anymore. You now run out and get some book. You run out and hear some seminar. You run out and get the newest fad that came out. You run out and you buy this book on the deeper purpose of life. You run out and you buy this book and all this and all that, and it tells you about all these little things you can do when my friend, the only thing you have to do is reckon yourself dead and understand what I gave you and realize that the difference between you and Ralph Schwartz, there is no difference. You need to be just as dead as he is. You do not need a book, *The Purpose-Driven Life*. You have got the book that drives your purpose in life right there. Somebody says, "That was the greatest book I ever read." Well, I am sorry, ma'am. This is the greatest one that I ever read. The tragedy is when God's people love a book that man wrote better than a book that God wrote. The tragedy is when you tell me, "Well, I just cannot understand that Bible, but I read that book, *The Purpose-Driven Life*, and I just got so much," you are telling me that you get more out of a book that a man wrote than a book that God wrote. What does that say about your relationship with the Holy Spirit of God who teaches you? The most damning statements I hear today are by saved men and women who are going to go to heaven that have not got a clue what I told you this morning. They are relying on some other saved sinner to write at them how to live godly when God gave you the book already and said, "Not only can you live godly, you do not have to be under any domination of sin because you are dead." That is the Christian life. That is why you have to learn your Bible.

VII. The Church's True Purpose: Building People, Not Buildings

My wife and I were talking yesterday. We were driving last night. We were talking about people, churches, and things like that. I told her, I said, and we were just talking about some things. I said, "You know what? I said, I do not know how long the Lord is going to tarry, but I am going to tell you something right now. I do not have any great expectations. I do not ever have the expectation of building a big church." I said, "We may someday may hit 400." She said, "I do not even think we will hit that." "Not when you are preaching." I am not sure how to take that. I said, "You want another great thing that I learned? Life, this is a killer. This is so foreign today that the average Christian cannot grasp, but it is true. I learned it." One of the greatest messages I will ever preach you is the things that I have learned. They are simple things, but they are profound things. Many of them I learned the hard way, but I learned them. See, I do not even mind if you have to learn. Somebody said, "Well, I always learn things the hard way." I do not care, but do you learn them? See, I do not care what your level of learning is. Do you learn them?

I will tell you the greatest thing, one of the great things that I have learned in life: buildings give glory to man. It is people that give glory to God. I would rather have a hundred people who gave glory to God than a church of 50,000 with some big edifice out there that gave glory to man. I can look down through the history of my life, and there are two men in my life that when they die, they will never leave. They will not be remembered for a big church they built. When Dr. Harold Henniger died, everybody associates Dr. Harold Henniger with the Canton Baptist

Temple, the humongous big church complex. When Dallas Billington died in Akron, they remembered Dallas Billington for a church of 10,000 people in a great church building. When Jack Hiles died out there in Hammond, Indiana, they remember Jack Hiles because of all the great things that he built and the school that he had and all of those stuff. Let me tell you something. The two guys in my life die, and they have their funeral. Now I do not think that I will probably get the chance to preach their funeral, but if I did, I would simply say this, that the legacy they left behind was not a building. Their legacy left behind was a book. In that legacy are literally hundreds of thousands of young men and young ladies just like myself that would have never had the truth if it would not have been for them. If they had spent their energy building a building for the glory of man, they never would have touched my life with a book, and I never would have touched your life with a book. You would never touch the next person's life with a book, and man would get the glory, and God would not. Buildings give man his glory. God does not get glory in gigantic buildings. God gets glory out of men and women's lives in that book. The only way he does that is you and I to reckon ourselves dead, live above the circumstances. There is nothing in life that should defeat you. Not a thing, not a thing.

Do you want to know another great lesson I learned? I am going to blow this message before it is all done today. The greatest preparation for tomorrow is what you do today. Today casts tomorrow. God's people today are living their lives like they are oblivious to whatever God wants them to do. That is why we are at the point now where we have got to take what we have and we have got to put our designs toward the Word of God. It is time now to find out where you are at in relationship to the book that someday is going to judge you. This is the defining time. No child left behind. I will do whatever I have to do to bring you along. We can make it work. I can do everything but make you want to do it. But I hope you understand today how these baptisms fit in. This one here is why we baptize the way we do. It tells you and me that we are dead to sin. When I am baptized into his death, I am dead to this world, but I am alive to Christ because of what he did coming down through that water and going back up.

Let us pray. Every head bowed and every eye closed. Father, I thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Lord, I love You and I love these people. Lord, You have given us a task. That task is not to build a great building. That task is to build men and women through the true temples of the true God will manifest the glory and the light of God. My job simplified is to get these people to quit giving You the short stick. My job, if I can do it, that is a hard job, but I still struggle with myself. My job is to get these people to quit putting You last, start putting You first. My job Lord is to try to get these people when they look at the world and all the things that are in it and look at You, to quit telling You to take a hike and take the world. Tough job, do not know if I can do it, but that is what I need to do. That is what we need to do because only then will God get the honor and glory out of our lives. Now Lord, I thank You for today. I hope that it was understandable. I hope that I laid it out clearly. Lord, as always, anybody can come, and I will help them break it down even more. But Lord, thank You. I wish more would have been here today to hear this, but Lord, You know what You are doing. I just pray Father, that You will have Your own will and Your own way. We will thank You and praise You. Now whenever you head down, whenever I close, hey, pal, let us.