

Various Scriptures

Sunday 10/17/2021

Again, I want to welcome all of you here today to our service. Today is a special day for all of us here at Old Paths Baptist Church. In the last year of our church, we have just had so many people that have gotten saved or have come in and just really been part of our ministry. It is just kind of overwhelming how many people the Lord just keeps bringing in.

Now we have some eighteen people today that we are going to baptize, and we are really excited about that. As we have already recognized you, your friends and family are here today, and we are excited about that.

I. The Confusion of Baptism

First off, what I want to do is put what we are going to do today into an understandable context or format, however you want to describe it. The reason for that is baptism is, without a doubt, one of the most confusing issues that people believe or hold beliefs on today. It is incredible.

Many times people get the complete wrong idea about baptism, and they are taught wrong about it. It has been that way all down through church history. I have been in the ministry over fifty years, and I am telling you there is never a time when you do not have to deal with somebody and help them understand what the Bible says.

I know of no other issue anywhere in the religious circles that probably is more hard to grasp and controversial than the idea of baptism. Some churches sprinkle; some churches, like us here, are going to immerse. Believe it or not, there are some churches that baptize you three times forward and two times backwards. I am not sure why they do that.

Sometimes every time they find the word baptism in the Bible, they try to make it water. That is not true. Some will call it a sacrament. Some will say that it is the way that you get saved and get to heaven by washing away your sins. Some will claim that baptism is a two-point deal, and you later get the baptism of the Holy Ghost, and it completes the whole thing. Some baptize babies; some only baptize adults. You will notice today that we have adults and kids here today who are going to be baptized.

I want you to understand what we are doing today so you can go away with a better appreciation. Baptism, as I said, is very confusing to most people. Honestly, most people never get into the Bible to that depth to really figure out and find out what the Bible says. So this is not going to be some theological lesson today.

I want to talk to you about basically seven questions, and we will go through them very quickly. These are seven questions that I am asked about people understanding baptism. I just want to walk you through from the Bible. This is not what our church just exclusively believes. It is not about what I believe. We take everything we do right back to the Word of God. I would say that these are probably the seven most asked questions about the Bible that we get into.

So if we could, let us go to the Lord in prayer for a moment, and then we will get started.

Father, we do thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. We love You. We thank You for the folks that You brought into our church in the last year or so and how it keeps growing and what good people they are. We thank You for the fact that so many are getting baptized today. We thank You, Father, for the friends and the family that are here today to support them. May we go home today with a little better understanding of actually what we are doing today and, more importantly, why we are doing it.

So help us today, Lord. Help me to be clear. Help me to make it very understandable that these good people who have come out today can better understand what their loved ones are about to partake in. We will thank You and praise You in Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen.

II. Baptism as an Ordinance

Now, the first thing I want to tell you is the fact that baptism from the Bible is an ordinance. You are going to find that in the Bible, to New Testament Christianity, there are two ordinances. In the Bible, an ordinance is a decree or a command that is given within a structure of law. So, baptism being one of the ordinances, it is given by the authority of Christ to the church to fulfill for the purpose that God intended it for it to fulfill.

The one ordinance is baptism. The other ordinance is the Lord's Supper. When you understand what both of them represent, you can see better at a quick glance how it fits into Christ's church. Baptism deals with us recognizing Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. You are going to see that as we come through it today.

So when He gave the ordinance of baptism to the church, and He told the church to keep that ordinance and to fulfill it, by that He is showing the resurrection of Christ, the death, burial, and resurrection of the Christ. We will talk about that in a moment.

The second ordinance is the Lord's Supper. We know it as communion. In that one, it deals with Christ's crucifixion. You remember that the night that He was betrayed, He had them up in the upper room, and He had the broken bread, "This is my body," and drink the grape juice, "This is my blood." It is connected with the crucifixion of Christ.

So both ordinances are connected with what Christ did for our salvation. One of them is the crucifixion, the Lord's Supper. The other one is the death, burial, and the resurrection. Without the death, burial, and the resurrection of Christ, Christianity is powerless. That is what gave Christianity its power: the fact that He did what no other man could do. He came up out of the grave. So these two represent the two aspects of Christianity dealing with the resurrection of Christ and His crucifixion. That is the first thing I want you to understand.

III. The Purpose of Baptism: Manifestation

Now the second thing: what does baptism really do? What is its fundamental purpose? Of course, when you get baptized, you will find that it is a manifestation of something. The definitive verse in the Bible on baptism is found in John chapter 1, verse 31. I always like to give my people

definitive verses, verses that you can go through that in one verse will define whatever the subject is. For baptism, it is John 1:31.

Here is what he said. This is John the Baptist speaking:

John 1:31

And I knew him not: but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.

That verse right there shows us the real purpose of baptism. That real purpose of baptism is that it manifests something to somebody. So here in John 1:31, Christ was showing up with John the Baptist down at the river. He was being baptized, as the verse says, to manifest Himself to the nation of Israel as their Messiah.

You and I in the New Testament church, we get baptized to manifest something too, but not the same thing that Christ manifested. He came to the nation of Israel as their Messiah. His baptism by John manifested Him to His nation. The baptism of these folks today is about manifesting something, but it is not to Israel. It is manifesting to the people around them today that they have truly been born again and saved. It is a public showing of the manifestation to the world that they truly have trusted Christ as their own personal Savior.

In both cases, baptism will always manifest something. With Christ, it was His Messiahship to Israel. To the folks today, it is to you here, people here, your family and friends, our people, and anybody in the world. You might say, "Well, how could you say the world? You are down here in a bomb shelter someplace with a few people." No, no, we are on YouTube this morning, and we have probably around 1,500 followers on YouTube from all around the world. We are here this morning at 11:20, but there are people in England that are watching us that it is eight o'clock in the evening. There are people in other parts of the world. We have them in Ireland, we have them in Africa, we have them in Mexico, we have them everywhere, and of course, all across the United States, and they are all tuning in today. So this baptism is not only a manifestation to you, it is a public manifestation to the people out there. We are really excited about that.

IV. Baptism and Salvation

Well, the third thing. Let us talk about baptism for salvation for a moment. Let me just say by starting out that baptism cannot save you. It cannot save anyone. So many people believe today that because they got baptized, that washed away their sins. The idea of you getting your sins washed away by the water in a public water system is not going to work.

The Bible teaches us very clearly that it is through the shedding of Christ's blood on Calvary's cross, His death on the cross, Him dying and shedding His blood that washes away your sin and my sin. The idea that water could wash away the stains of my sin—I needed something more powerful than water. I needed something bigger than Mr. Clean. I got the Lord Jesus Christ, and His blood on the cross had enough power in it, and His death, His sacrifice had enough power in it to not only wash away my sins, but the sins of the whole world.

The Bible says in 1 Peter chapter 1, verse 18 and 19:

1 Peter 1:18-19

Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers;

But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:

It was the blood of Christ that washes away our sin. He says in Ephesians chapter 1, verse 7:

Ephesians 1:7

In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

So we need to understand that when baptism manifests something, it never saves us. It is a manifestation of the One that died for us that can save us. That is what you need to understand.

I am not a very intelligent individual. My claim to fame is I tell everybody I am the fastest one of the slow class, but I have a little bit of common sense. I thought to myself, if salvation was truly through these people getting baptized today or anybody getting baptized, then I would bring up the point: why did Christ have to die? Why did He have to come down, go through the tremendous suffering and agony on the cross, nails in His hand and His feet, a spear in His side, His back ripped with whips? Why did He have to go through all of that? If baptism is the mode for salvation, He would have said, "Get baptized," and that would have been the way. But you see, the reason why He came down and died is because baptism cannot save you.

In fact, you will find in John chapter 4, verse 2, that it tells us that Jesus Christ never baptized anybody. All through the Gospels—Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John—and His public ministry, the woman at the well, Lazarus, all these people, they get saved by His presence. But the Bible is very clear to let us know that He never baptized anybody. His disciples did. So if baptism was the mode of salvation, then Jesus never saved anybody because He never baptized anybody.

This is a little thing about the Bible and the way that it does. You will notice that there is something that Jesus does or does not do or says or does not say that really are keys. When it came to His mother, Mary, He never called her mother. He always called her woman. There is not one place in the Bible when Jesus is talking directly to her that He calls her mother. He always calls her woman. People maybe do not catch that, but years ago, I saw that what He wanted to do is He did not want to give anybody a license down the road that would take Mary, who was a good woman, but she was a sinner just like we all are, and make her the mother of God. So He chose not to call her mother so nobody, even though people have, nobody could use Him as the text to say Jesus called her mother. He always called her woman.

He did the same thing with baptism. He chose not to baptize anybody because He did not want to give license to somebody down the road saying, "Well, baptism is salvation because Jesus baptized people." So He abstained from that. I am telling you right now, it is a thing where baptism is like a wedding ring. You put on a wedding ring when you get married, not because it

makes you married, but it shows the world that you are married. Baptism does not save you, but it shows the world that you are saved.

Honestly, there is no one anywhere in the Bible who ever got baptized in a New Testament church for salvation. It simply did not happen. So the vital thing I want you to understand is that these people today that are getting baptized, they are not getting baptized to be saved. They have already been saved, and baptism now is the identification with that.

V. What Baptism Represents to God

Well, let us look at the fourth thing, and we will work through this. So now, if baptism does not save you, what does it represent to God? I think this is important. We saw already that it is a manifestation of something. We saw and talked about it being one of the ordinances in the Bible, there being two.

Jesus' baptism represents to God our acceptance of His death, burial, and resurrection. You will hear Danny say in just a little bit when he is up here doing the baptism, he will put the person there. We go through this with everybody because people kind of freak out sometimes in the water, so you make them feel comfortable. It is nice and warm in there. We have some little fish going around in there to make it feel comfortable for you.

He will take that person, and he will obviously ask them if they have been saved, and they will say, "Yes, I have." Then he will take them and put—we always let them hold their own nose because people freak out when you try to grab their nose. I never know how much pressure to put on your nose, and after two or three nosebleeds in the baptistry, I gave up on doing it myself and let them hold it.

Here is what he says. After he asks them if they have been saved, he says, "Buried in the likeness of Jesus' death," and he puts them under the water. Then he brings them out, and he will say, "Raised in the likeness of His resurrection." You see, it is a picture. It is a picture of what Christ did for us. When we manifest that to the world by being baptized, we are showing people outwardly what has actually taken place inwardly. It is a figure. It is a picture.

We already showed you that it manifests that you have been saved by the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Gospel of Christ, 1 Corinthians chapter 15, is simply this:

1 Corinthians 15:3-4

For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures;

And that he was buried, and he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:

So when we take somebody and put them down and bring them back up, that is what the picture is. He says over there in 1 Peter chapter 3, verse 21 and 22, and this is the good verse, talking about baptism. Listen carefully. He says:

1 Peter 3:21-22

The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God,) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:

Who is gone into heaven, and is on the right hand of God; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him.

He clearly tells you that it is a picture. It is a figure. Not of you getting actually saved, but because you are saved, it is a picture of the resurrection of Christ. That is what it means and represents to God.

VI. Who Should Be Baptized?

Now we ask the question next that I am asked many times: who should be baptized? And why do not we baptize babies? You are going to see up here today some of our young kids. You are going to see Brady, you are going to see Jonathan, you are going to see Sophia, you are going to see Landon, you are going to see some little guys and gals up here. But you are not going to see any babies. I get asked from time to time, "Why do not we baptize babies?"

Let me explain it to you. First of all, in the Bible there is what we call the age of accountability. That age of accountability is—and every kid is different, no kid is the same—but when a kid is a baby or up to a point until they hit that age of accountability, the age of accountability is when that kid now understands right from wrong. The Bible is very clear in Romans 7 and also Romans 4 and also in Romans 5 that when a baby or a young child does not know right from wrong, they are not accountable to the law, and the law is not imputed to them. God does not impute sin to them. What we call under the blood of Christ. So if a baby dies, that baby goes to heaven, gets a free ticket. If a little child dies under the age of accountability, they go to heaven, they are under the blood of Christ.

Now I say that every child is different. This is the parent's job to be able to work with their kid, help them as they understand the Bible. You are going to find that if you come to church and you are involved in church through the Sunday school, through your dealing with your child, at some point they are going to start to ask about that. They are going to see people get saved in our church, and they are going to want to do it too. They are going to have an older brother or sister get saved, and they are going to want to do it too.

This is where the parent's job is to make sure that that child completely understands that you do not get saved because your big brother or big sister got saved. You do not get saved because somebody else in the church got saved. You do not get saved because you heard Pastor Bob preach a message on heaven and hell, and you do not want to go to heaven with your mom and dad. That is not the reason you get saved. They need to understand that the reason they got saved is because they understood that they had a personal sin debt to God. It had nothing to do with mom and dad, nothing to do with brother and sister. It had to simply deal with the fact that they as an individual now have come to the age of accountability, and now they are accountable to the law of God.

As the Bible says, because of Adam's sin, death passed upon all men. Now they have, as Paul said, "I was alive once without the law, but when this commandment came, sin revived, and I died." Now it is a time where mom and dad sit down with them, help them understand, and walk them through. These little guys that are getting baptized today, their moms and dads have walked them through this. They understand what they are doing and why they are doing it.

In the Bible, again, you will find that there has never, ever, ever, ever, ever been a baby baptized anywhere in the Bible, Old Testament or New Testament. It comes to the point when a person comes to that age of accountability, that is when they need to be saved, and then once they get saved, they need to be baptized.

We have adults that come to our church that were never saved, and they are in their twenties, thirties, forties, fifties, and they have never trusted Christ as their own personal Savior. They will come to a church, or somebody will work with them, or somebody will meet them and talk to them, like the guys at the street ministry last night down there when they were preaching on the street, and they meet a guy. They talk to him. He sees his need, and then they show him how to become a Christian, and it goes from there. We have them come in like that all the time.

So who should be baptized? Anybody who is over the age of accountability, who understands that they are a sinner, no matter what age they are, once they hit that age and they trust Christ as their own personal Savior, now they need to be baptized. They need to manifest to the world outwardly what has taken place inwardly in their heart.

In the book of Acts, which is the beginning of church history, by the way, at the start of the church, every saved man and woman did three things, and you will find that they come all the way from early Acts on up all the way through. Every man and woman adult that got saved, they did three things:

1. After they were saved, the first thing they did is they got baptized.
2. The second thing they did is they identified and joined a New Testament local church, whether it be the church at Antioch or the church at Ephesus, wherever it was.
3. Then the third thing they did, they identified with that church, and they started a ministry to serve the Lord with what He has done.

So that is who should be baptized.

VII. What Baptism Represents to the Believer

Now let us look at the sixth thing. If baptism does not save me, now I understand what it represents to God, but what does it represent to me personally? We have already seen a couple of things here. When Jesus got baptized, He was manifesting Himself to the nation of Israel, John 1:31, we have seen that. His baptism now was the start of His public ministry to the nation of Israel.

Baptism for the believer today will be the first act of obedience that you follow after you get saved that is an answer to a good conscience toward God. 1 Peter 3:21-22, I already gave you that. So as Christ, when we get baptized, we too now manifest what has happened to us publicly,

and then we too, just as Christ, He manifested Himself to Israel. We manifest ourselves to the world around us today, but then both of us begin our public ministry of serving the Lord Jesus Christ, telling others what Christ has done for them.

Philippians chapter 1, verse 6, it is a very key verse around here in this church. It says:

Philippians 1:6

Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ:

That is what He does. When you got saved, God began a good work in your life. The next step is baptism. Then when you get baptized and you manifest yourself as a good conscience toward God to the world, then you start your public ministry. That is what these folks are doing here today when they get baptized.

VIII. The Mode of Baptism: Immersion

Now let us look at the last thing. So let us talk about the mode of baptism for a moment and why. Now this becomes very confusing to people, and I understand that. Fundamentally, when it comes to circles of religion, there are two basic forms of baptism. You have people who sprinkle, and then you have people who immerse.

As I have said, and again, let us just rely on our common sense for a moment. We now know from the Bible that baptism is a picture of somebody's death, somebody's burial, and somebody's resurrection, the Lord Jesus Christ. Now I have done many, many, many funerals. You have been to many, many, many funerals, and you know that in a funeral when somebody is dead, you do not stand them up in a corner and throw dirt in their face. You put them under. They go in the ground, just like Christ did. They go under.

It is the thing where you see again, nowhere in the Bible is anybody ever sprinkled. Nowhere in the Bible, in Old Testament or New Testament, is anybody ever sprinkled for baptism. When John the Baptist baptized, he did it in a river. He could have done it by a well. He could have done it with a bottle of water from Quick Trip. He could have done it any way if it was sprinkling. He needed to have a river. Why a river? Because a river has a lot of water in it. When Jesus was baptized, He was baptized in a river.

The word baptized itself means to dip, to put down, not sprinkle. In Mark chapter 1, verses 7 through 11, John baptized Jesus, and verse 10 says that He comes down in the water and He comes up out of the water. There was no sprinkling involved. Of course, this is the picture, up and out. He is immersed, like we are going to do today. We are going to take those people, and we are going to stand them there, and then we are going to put them down, a picture of His death, and bring them up.

In Acts chapter 8, you have another great example. This is a story of Philip and the Ethiopian eunuch. You know maybe the story how that Philip is down in Samaria. He is having a great revival, and God pulls him out and sends him on the backside of the Gaza desert to an Ethiopian

eunuch. That eunuch has been traveling in the desert, and somebody gave him a copy of the Old Testament, Isaiah chapter 53, which actually talks about Christ's death and resurrection and His burial. He is sitting on that chariot reading it. The Holy Spirit of God says to Philip, "This guy needs to get saved, and I have given him the Gospel through that message. Now you go talk to him."

So Philip goes up and talks to him, and they get into a conversation. The Bible says that Philip takes that Isaiah 53 and begins to preach to him Jesus. He tells him about Christ's death, burial, and resurrection. The Ethiopian eunuch gets saved. He trusts Christ as his own personal Savior. So Philip is riding along with him, and they are going someplace, and they are obviously talking, and they come up on, I guess it was an oasis, but it is a large body of water. Evidently Philip is explaining to him about salvation and baptism. Then they come up here, and the eunuch says:

Acts 8:36-37

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?

And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.

You know what Philip said? He says, "I will tell you what hinders you from being baptized. You have to know for sure you are saved." And the Ethiopian eunuch replies, "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." The Bible says that Philip takes him out of that chariot. They go down into the water. He puts him under the water, and he brings him back out of the water. He immersed him. The immersion is a picture again of the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

You are telling me that they are in the desert? They are there without any water, no canteens, no water jugs, nothing with water, that if he had the sprinkling, he needed much water? No, it is a picture that baptism has to be by immersion because of what it represents, the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ.

IX. Conclusion and Call to Action

So today, these people here before you all have trusted the Lord Jesus Christ as their own personal Savior. This day officially will be the start of their public ministry within this church, no matter how old they are. We have little guys like those up there that give their testimony, that they teach the Bible. This is the beginning for them. Even though many of them have already been doing that, this is the official start, just like it was with Christ. This will be the start of their public ministry and a picture or a likeness of the new life that they have now in Christ because of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ was buried. He died, He was buried, He rose again the third day, and they are showing you the picture of that today as they are baptized.

Now Danny, as I said in just a few moments, and you guys want to come on down here and get lined up, I think Danny is already back there. I think we have people back there that are going to—we have a lifeguard there that is going to help. Just so you know what is going to happen. Oh, look at it, this is great, man. This is just great. You will see some of the older guys there like

Jimmy and Zach. Here is what we do: we allow dads, if they want to go down in and be part of the baptism, we allow that. Both Jim and Zach are pastors here. They are going to baptize their own kids.

Here is what is going to happen. Danny is going to get them down in the water, and he is going to ask them for sure if they know they have been saved. When they give a profession of faith, he is going to basically say to them, "Well, based on your profession of faith, I baptize you, my brother or my sister, whoever, male or female, buried in the likeness of Jesus' death and raised in the likeness of His resurrection." You are going to see today that this will be the first public witness that they have been changed on the inside and now on the outside.

So we are going to do the ladies first. If you want to come up and get a picture, as I said, feel free, come on up here, just get right here and take whatever pictures you want. Then I will be back here when Danny is done, and we will close out, and then we will be out of here, and you can go celebrate today. So Danny, take it away.

Let me just say I thank you for being here today. We are going to close in prayer. We are a half hour earlier in getting out of church today. Do not get used to that. Next week we will be back again. Here again, do not forget, if you are visiting or you know who you are, go back to the bookstore. Do not feel shy about that. I will help you. Somebody else will help you.

On this too, if you are here this morning and you heard what I said, kind of a glorified plan of salvation of what Christ has done for you, if you are here this morning and you want to know for sure your sins can be forgiven, come and talk to me. I will be around for a while, and I will be glad to have someone open up a Bible, if you are a lady, one of our ladies, if you are a guy, one of our guys. Show you how you know your sins can be forgiven. Thank you for being here today. We love you very much. Let us have a word of prayer, and then we will be dismissed, and make your way back to the bookstore. Visit all you want. I know many of you have plans today, so enjoy your day together, and we love you very much.

Let us pray.

Father, we thank You and praise You for the Lord Jesus. Thank You for the family, the friends, and our people of our church that are here today. Lord, this has been a great time, a time where we are just so thankful for all the people that You brought into our church. Lord, it is so easy to see why these kids are such good kids because getting to meet the parents today, the parents are good parents, and they have done what is right with their kids. I appreciate that, Lord. Thank You for the fact that we have a small part of their children's lives, no matter what age they are. Lord, may this be the beginning of a relationship with them and friendship with them that they know they are always welcome here. Whatever we do, whatever activities, whatever church service, whatever, or if they ever need my services, that they can feel free to call upon me, and I will be there for them. We love You. We thank You for today. Ask the rest of this day the blessings of Christ. In Jesus' name, for His sake we ask it. Amen. God bless you. You are dismissed. Thank you for being here today.