

THE GOSPEL and BAPTISM

THE GOSPEL

1. Do you believe you aren't perfect and need help?

For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Ro 6:23)

2. Do you believe that God loves everyone so much that he gave up his son Jesus, so that we might have eternal life? That Jesus lived a perfect life, died a real death, and resurrected on the 3rd day?

For God so loved the world that he gave his one and only Son, that whoever believes in him shall not perish but have eternal life. (Jn 3:16)

3. Do you believe that grace is a gift to be received by faith? That it is not a wage to be earned?

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. (Eph 2:8)

4. Do you believe that a life of following Jesus means responding to his love with love? A life of bearing fruit and keeping his words within you? Do you believe that this is the best, and only, path to joy?

5 "I am the vine; you are the branches. If you remain in me and I in you, you will bear much fruit; apart from me you can do nothing. [...] 7 If you remain in me and my words remain in you, ask whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. 8 This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples. 9 "As the Father has loved me, so have I loved you. Now remain in my love. 10 If you keep my commands, you will remain in my love, just as I have kept my Father's commands and remain in his love. 11 I have told you this so that my joy may be in you and that your joy may be complete. (Jn 15:5; 7-11)

Three words, defined

SIN literally means, to miss the mark. It is our inherited nature to be imperfect. Therefore, we are unable and unworthy to be in a relationship with God.

SALVATION is the essential help we need from God: a free gift received in faith in Jesus, his teachings and his sacrifice on the cross.

SANCTIFICATION is the life-long process of becoming more like Jesus, more like the person God created us to be, it is a personal responsibility that can be neglected or pursued.

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UNDERSTANDING BAPTISM

1. Baptism is a symbol.

I. Illustrating Jesus' death, burial and resurrection.

When we are lowered into the water, it is like the burial of Jesus; when we are raised up out of the water, it is like the resurrection of Jesus. (Rom 6:4)

II. Illustrating your new life as a Christian and connection to Christian community, the Church.

So in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith, for all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. (Ga 3:26)

“An outward symbol of an inward commitment”

3. Baptism follows the example set by Jesus and obeys his command.

At that time Jesus came from Nazareth . . . and was baptized by John in the Jordan. (Mk 1:9)

Go, then, to all peoples everywhere and make them my disciples: baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, and teach them to obey everything I have commanded you. (Mt. 28:19-20)

4. Baptism is for every believer. As soon as you believe, you can be baptized! Baptism follows salvation, but it doesn't "make you saved." It is an act of obedience, not a requirement for salvation.

But when they believed Philip as he preached the good news . . . and the name of Jesus Christ, they were baptized, both men and women. (Acts 8:12)

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THE GOSPEL, FOLLOWED BY BAPTISM AND SANCTIFICATION

Read the following passage and highlight the phrases and words that relate to the Gospel and Baptism.

22 “Fellow Israelites, listen to this: Jesus of Nazareth was a man accredited by God to you by miracles, wonders and signs, which God did among you through him, as you yourselves know. 23 This man was handed over to you by God’s deliberate plan and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men, put him to death by nailing him to the cross. 24 But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. [...]

36 “Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Messiah.”

37 When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?”

38 Peter replied, “Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39 The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call.”

40 With many other words he warned them; and he pleaded with them, “Save yourselves from this corrupt generation.” 41 Those who accepted his message were baptized, and about three thousand were added to their number that day.

(Acts 2:22-24; 36–41)

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SIX WAYS TO UNDERSTAND A THING: BAPTISM

ONE face value, basic meaning, common definition: what is baptism?

TWO comparisons, similarities: what is baptism like?

THREE contrasts, differences: what is baptism not like?

FOUR causes, assumptions, origins: What leads to baptism?

FIVE effects, results, consequences: What impact does baptism have?

SIX blind spots, external insight, questions: what still doesn't make sense about baptism?