

Water Baptism - Part 1

by Derek Prince

Christian baptism is a seal of discipleship and a public declaration of one's faith in Jesus Christ, requiring repentance, belief, discipleship, and a good conscience.

Duration: 24:00

Scripture: Matthew 6:33, Matthew 28:19-20, Mark 16:16, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:3-11, Ephesians 4:5, Colossians 2:12

Topics: "Water Baptism"

Description

In this sermon, Derek Prince emphasizes the importance of not just believing and confessing the Gospel, but also demonstrating it through our actions. He shares a principle he taught to African teachers, stating that people remember 80% of what they hear, see, and do. He then delves into the commission given by Jesus Christ in Matthew 28:19-20, where Jesus instructs his disciples to make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. Prince concludes by stating that they will actually carry out the ordinance of water baptism, putting their preaching into practice.

Transcript

This is tape number 2019. Derek Prince speaks on the subject, Redemption, Plan and Fulfillment. This message is entitled, Water Baptism.

The subject of my message to you this afternoon is Christian baptism. And after I have brought this message to you from the Word of God, we will actually go into the ordinance of water baptism and see it carried out. We will not merely preach about this in theory, but we will carry it out in practice.

Now I've used the word ordinance and that may not be clear to some of you. So I would like to explain to you briefly what I understand by the word ordinance. Somebody who was of a scientific background once told me that the definition of the word instinct is an unlearned pattern of behavior.

An ordinance likewise is a pattern of behavior. But it is not unlearned, it is one that is revealed in the New Testament and is then taught by the ministers to the people of God. As I understand the teaching of the New Testament there are three main ordinances.

The Lord's Supper, baptism and the anointing of the sick with oil. And the principle in each of these ordinances is the same. Normally speaking when the message of God's Word is brought to us we believe it in the heart, then we confess it with the mouth.

This is the basic requirement for salvation that we shall believe with the heart, Jesus as Lord, confess with the mouth we enter into salvation. But in an ordinance we take one further step. Not merely do we believe with the heart, not merely do we confess with the mouth, but we actually carry out a pattern of behavior which tells the story in action of what we have already claimed that we believed in our heart.

And there are these three patterns of behavior that set forth the great basic truths of the gospel of Jesus Christ. These truths are so important that God has ordained that they should not merely be learned and confessed with the mouth. But they should also be demonstrated and carried out in action.

For five years it was my responsibility in East Africa to train teachers for African schools. And I used to try to inculcate into these teachers a certain principle which is this. That children remember about 40% of what they hear, 60% of what they hear and see, 80% of what they hear, see and do.

In other words if you really want to impress something on the mind of a pupil, not merely do you let them hear it, not merely do you let them hear it and see it as for instance on the chalkboard. But you let them act it out in some way or another. And it's the acting out of that thing that really fixes it in the mind of the pupil.

Now God is the greatest of all teachers and the greatest of all psychologists. And because he has a concern for the well-being of his people he has put in the New Testament these three ordinances, these three patterns of behavior. Each one of which sets forth a tremendous truth which God never wanted his people to forget.

The anointing of the sick with oil is a picture that when the believer puts his faith in Jesus Christ and the provision of God through Jesus Christ. The Holy Spirit who is typified by the oil will give life, resurrection life, to the mortal body of that believer. The scripture text I would use is Romans 8 11.

If the spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken or give life to your mortal bodies by his spirit that dwelleth in you. The way that we declare our faith and the power of the Holy Spirit to give life to our mortal body is that we get the elders of the church in the name of the Lord to anoint our physical body with oil. It is not the oil that heals but the oil is the picture of the Holy Spirit who is going to minister the life of Jesus to our physical body.

So this is an ordinance, a pattern of behavior which has a very special meaning. Then there is the Lord's Supper. We declare by participating in the Lord's Supper that we accept the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ on our behalf.

We accept his body given for us and we accept his blood shed for us and in accepting this we come together as brother Charles Simpson said, in the one house protected by the blood and we feed together upon the one body and we thus become one body. This is the essential truth which is contained in the Lord's Supper. Now we're dealing with the ordinance of baptism and I want to bring out for you as clearly as I can the nature of this ordinance.

The New Testament scriptures that teach about it and the significance of it. I want to do this briefly and in outline. I want to commence by just setting forth the commission given by Jesus Christ at the end of his earthly ministry to carry out this ordinance of baptism.

In the gospel of Matthew chapter 28 verses 19 and 20 Jesus said to his disciples go ye therefore and teach all nations. This is the King James Version but many modern versions translated make disciples of

all nations which is a more correct translation. Jesus said go ye therefore and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you and lo I'm with you always even unto the end of the world Amen. We observe that Jesus did not tell his disciples to make members. He told his disciples to make fellow disciples.

Disciples who would be disciples of them as they had been of the Lord Jesus Christ. And he said once the person has come to the place where he is willing to submit to discipleship the outward act which demonstrates that willingness which seals his profession of discipleship is that he should be baptized in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit. Having been baptized he then enters into a further life of discipline and training.

The person baptizing him or the ministers that are responsible for his spiritual well-being must then teach him to observe all things that the Lord taught his disciples to observe. And Jesus said this process is to go on till I come back. He said I'm with you to the end of the age.

In other words he made disciples. He said you go out and make disciples and when they have committed themselves to discipleship let the outward evidence of their commitment to discipleship be the fact that they are baptized in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. Then you train them just as I've trained you and they in their turn will go out make disciples, baptize them, train them.

Those disciples in turn will go out and do the same. And as far as God was concerned the process was to continue the same until the age closed. There was never any reason to change or amend that process because it was the right one.

It was the one that worked. It was the one that God had authorized and set his seal of approval upon. So the commission is go and make disciples of all nations.

What's the outward evidence of discipleship? What's the thing that seals the commitment to discipleship? Baptizing them in the name of the Father, the Son, the Holy Spirit. In Mark's gospel chapter 16 verses 15 and 16 we have a similar commission given to the disciples at the close of the earthly ministry of Jesus. Mark 16 verses 15 and 16.

And he said unto them go ye into all the world and preach the gospel the good news to every creature. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved but he that believeth not shall be condemned. So Jesus said this gospel is to be preached to every creature in all the world and every person who believes the gospel is to show forth his believing.

The seal of his believing will be that he will be baptized. Just as the seal of discipleship was to be baptized so the evidence of believing is to be baptized. In other words the thing that immediately follows believing and becoming a disciple is being baptized.

This is the outward evidence that a person has believed and committed himself to discipleship. Now in the New Testament I believe we have four clear requirements laid down for being baptized. Taking them in this order which seems to me to be possibly the logical one.

Acts chapter 2 and verse 38. On the day of Pentecost when the Jewish multitude heard Peter's message about Jesus Christ his death and resurrection. Were convicted of their sinful condition they said men and

brethren what shall we do? Peter said repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

The first thing to do before they could be baptized was to repent. To make a firm decision to turn from their sinful ways their rebellion, their stubbornness, their self-sufficiency, their self-righteousness. To turn and submit to God and be willing to meet his further requirements.

Now the outward evidence of repentance was to be baptized. In March 1616 we have already read that the person who believes the gospel is to be baptized. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.

But before you can be baptized you must believe. Matthew 28 19 the requirement is to become a disciple. Go and make disciples of all nations baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.

In first Peter 3 21 the Apostle Peter brings out another requirement in relation to baptism. He compares baptism as we shall see a little later to the experience of Noah and his family entering into the ark and being saved in the ark by the water that plunged the rest of the world to destruction. And when he uses this phrase being saved by water he then goes on to say the like figure or picture or the antitype of salvation by water in the ark.

The antitype the corresponding ordinance or requirement in the new covenant is baptism. Then he says not the washing of dirty body not the putting away of the filth of the flesh but the answer of a good conscience toward God. So a person who is to be baptized must be able to answer God with a good conscience.

The sinner who has repented, believed and submitted to baptism can then answer God with a good conscience. Not because he is not a sinner but because as a sinner he has met God's requirements for forgiveness and salvation. So the scripture lays down clearly these four prior requirements before being baptized.

To repent, to believe, to become a disciple and to answer God with a good conscience. Now I do not in any way desire to be controversial but I think it is self-evident. I don't think anybody can dispute this question that an infant cannot meet any of these requirements.

An infant cannot repent, cannot believe, cannot become a disciple and cannot answer God with a good conscience. For this reason I personally do not believe that the ordinance of water baptism is applicable to infants. People may say well we are believers we want our child to be acknowledged by God.

I believe the scriptural pattern in the New Testament is to do for your child what the parents of Jesus did for Jesus. They did not baptize him. They brought him to the house of the Lord and they presented him to the Lord.

And when the mothers of Israel brought their little children to Jesus and wanted the blessing of God upon their children. Jesus did not baptize those children. He took them up in his arms and blessed them.

Now this I believe is the answer to the cry of believing parents hearts. How can we know that we have solemnly dedicated and presented our little newborn babe to the Lord? We want to know that this life is in the Lord's hands for time and eternity. We want to express our faith for God's protection and blessing and care over this child.

How can we do it? My answer is not by baptism because the infant cannot meet the conditions for baptism. But the thing that God has indicated in the New Testament is pleasing to him. Is that you bring that little one to the house of the Lord.

Solemnly present your little one to the Lord and allow the minister who is in the place of Christ to take that little one up in his arms and bless it. Now this I believe is the scriptural answer to the desire of every sincere believer to know that the blessing of God rests upon that little life that has been born into their family. But coming back to the question of baptism.

I still believe the New Testament makes it absolutely clear that before being baptized a person must repent, must believe, must be willing to become a disciple and must answer God with a good conscience. Now let us look for a moment at some of the examples in the book of Acts. And we're going to go through this this afternoon very, very quickly.

I just have them outlined some of the main examples here. First of all on the day of Pentecost, Acts 2 41. It says three thousand persons surrendered their wills to God.

And it says as many as gladly received the word of Peter were baptized. And I do believe the same applies to us today. If we gladly receive the word of the gospel we will be baptized.

If we are not willing to be baptized we have not gladly received the word. We may have received the word but not with gladness. We have inner reservations.

It fights against our tradition or our social position or something else in our lives. So we acknowledge the word but we do not receive it gladly. But as many as gladly received the word it's definitive.

This was the outward evidence that every person that gladly received the word they were baptized. Then we read in Acts chapter 8 that Philip went down to Samaria and preached one message to the Samaritans and the message was Christ. That's all he preached.

But it says in Acts 8 12 when they believed Philip preaching the things concerning the name of Jesus and the kingdom of God. They were baptized both men and women. Every person in the book of Acts who heard the gospel and believed knew immediately that it was his responsibility to be baptized forthwith.

There is not a single case in the book of Acts of any person who believed the gospel and claimed salvation through faith in Jesus Christ without being immediately baptized. Later on in the eighth chapter of Acts Philip is on the road from Jerusalem to Gaza. He meets the Ethiopian eunuch in his chariot.

Climbs up in the chariot finds the eunuch reading from the 53rd chapter of Isaiah. The eunuch confesses he doesn't know about whom he is reading. And then it says Philip opened his mouth at the same scripture and preached unto the eunuch Jesus.

One thing I like about Philip was his message was so simple. When he went to Samaria he preached Christ. And when he met the eunuch he preached Jesus.

That's all it says that he preached. But a little later the chariot was passing a pool of water or stream beside the road. And the eunuch said not Philip look here's water why shouldn't I be baptized.

And Philip said if you believe you certainly may. And the scripture says they both went down into the water. Both Philip and the eunuch and Philip baptized the eunuch.

You see that immediately the eunuch accepted the message of Philip. Without further instruction or any other kind of preliminary. He knew that it was required of him that he be baptized.

And he was extremely anxious to be baptized as quickly as possible. Act 9 18 we read the conversion of Saul of Tarsus on the Damascus road. And then he came into Damascus and Ananias was sent to him a humble disciple.

To lay hands on him that he might receive his sight and be filled with the Holy Spirit. And in Acts 9 18 it says he was baptized forthwith immediately. And in the 22nd chapter of Acts the reference is not given here.

Paul is giving his own testimony of how Ananias came to him. Laid hands on him that he might receive his sight. And he records that Ananias sent to him immediately after this.

Now why tarryest thou? Arise and be baptized and wash away thy sins calling on the name of the Lord. This was the attitude of the New Testament ministers of the gospel. What are you waiting for? If you believed in Jesus Christ be baptized forthwith.

In Acts chapter 10 we read how Peter was directed to the house of Cornelius. Supernaturally by a vision. And he began to tell them about Jesus while he was still preaching.

The Holy Spirit fell on the whole household of Cornelius. And with our exception they were all baptized in the Holy Spirit. The evidence being that the Jewish believers heard these Gentiles.

Speak with tongues and magnify God. So then Peter and the Jews because of this evidence. That the Gentiles had received the Holy Spirit.

Had to acknowledge them as fellow believers fellow Christians. And of course immediately the outward act of acknowledgement. Was the act of baptism.

So Peter said can any man forbid water. That these should not be baptized in water. Which had received the Holy Spirit just as well as we have.

You see the question was if they were Christians. Then they had the immediate right to water baptism. This was the outward mark that would set them aside.

As being received by the church as fellow believers. And it says in the last verse of the 10th chapter. Peter commanded them to be baptized.

He did not recommend, he commanded. Now these people had already received the baptism in the Holy Spirit. But the baptism in the Holy Spirit is not a substitute for water baptism.

Neither is water baptism a substitute for the baptism in the Holy Spirit. They are two separate but complementary provisions of God. For every person who comes to faith in Jesus Christ.

Then in Acts chapter 16. We have the dramatic incident of Paul and Silas in the prison. And at midnight they're singing and praising.

And God sends an earthquake shakes the prison. Opens every door sets every prisoner free. The jailer springs in and is about to commit suicide.

Because he had to answer with his own life for the life of his prisoners. But Paul said don't do yourself any harm we're all here. And then the jailer said what must I do to be saved.

And the answer given in Acts 16 31 is believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And thou shall be saved and thy house, thy family. Then it says they taught the word of God to the jailer and his household.

And they were all baptized the same hour of the night. Look at the urgency of that. They didn't even wait for dawn to come.

The moment they were convinced. That they must put their faith in Jesus Christ for salvation. Immediately the whole family having heard the word.

And the scripture is very emphatic that they all heard the word. And they all believed there were no infants in that family. They were all able to hear.

They were all able to believe. Having done that immediately the whole household was baptized. As an evidence of their faith in Jesus Christ.

Acts 19 5 we read that Paul came to Ephesus found certain disciples. Who were only disciples of John the Baptist. He found out that they had not received the Holy Spirit.

And when he began to inquire why they hadn't received the Holy Spirit. He discovered that they didn't have the solid basis of faith in Jesus Christ. His death and resurrection.

So he laid this basis taught them about Jesus. And they were then baptized with Christian baptism. Acts 19 6 says that after that Paul laid his hands upon them.

The Holy Spirit came upon them. They spake with tongues and prophesied. So this is the New Testament pattern.

The book of Acts knows of no other pattern. It is always believe and be baptized. And normally they were baptized I would say within a few hours of believing.

I question whether it is actually in line with the whole message of the New Testament. To allow as much as 48 hours to elapse between believing and being baptized. We still have a way to go before we are back on New Testament ground.

Fully and completely. Though there are a number of churches now which keep their baptistry open. And every time a person comes forward to confess faith in Jesus Christ.

That person is immediately immersed. And that is really the way it should be. All right now let's look on a little further.

And consider if we may for a few moments. The spiritual significance of water baptism. Now we're considering what is this pattern of behavior saying.

Why do I do it? What is the truth that I'm attesting when I go through this ordinance? And the answer I think is given very clearly in Romans chapter 6. We'll turn there and read some of the opening verses of the sixth chapter of Romans. Paul says beginning at verse 3 and I believe we could read through verse 11. Romans 6 reading 3 through 11.

Know ye not that so many of us that 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. 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 was crucified with him. That the body of sin might be destroyed or rendered ineffective.

That henceforth we should not be the slaves of sin. For he that is dead is freed or justified from sin. Now if we be dead with Christ we believe that we shall also live with him.

Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more. Death hath no more dominion over him. For in that he died he died unto sin once.

But in that he liveth he liveth unto God. Likewise reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin. But alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

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