

Baptism the Testimony of Salvation

by Erlo Stegen

Baptism is a symbol of salvation, not a means of salvation, and requires a genuine change of heart and life to be effective.

Scripture: 1 Peter 3:20

Topics: "Baptism", "True Transformation"

Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes that baptism is a powerful testimony of salvation, not a mere ritual that guarantees transformation. He critiques the belief that infant christening or water baptism alone can save, asserting that true baptism symbolizes a genuine repentance and a new life in Christ. Stegen shares personal testimonies of individuals transformed by Christ, highlighting that true change comes from a relationship with Jesus, not from the act of baptism itself. He urges believers to examine their lives for any unconfessed sins and to live authentically for Christ, as baptism should reflect a true commitment to following Him. Ultimately, he calls for a clear separation from sin and a wholehearted dedication to God's will.

Transcript

1Pet 3:20, 21

"20 who formerly were disobedient, when once the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.

21 There is also an antitype which now saves us--baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,"

Some believe by being Christened as babies they are born again. Later they are to be confirmed that what happened to them as a baby was indeed true. However one finds that many going through the process are never born again. Their lives never change and they do not know Christ.

Others are baptised for the washing away of sin; but water baptism cannot remove your sin. It is only a symbol that you have died with Christ and is raised to newness of life in Christ.

Baptism is saying I have repented from sin, have separated from it and am living a new life in Christ.

I saw a girl with a shining face of about 15 (or so I thought). When I talked with her she told me where she was from and that she had been washed in the Blood of Jesus from her sin - that was the reason of her inner joy and peace. She was actually 25 and used to be a prostitute in Durban. When I saw this it struck me once again how that Jesus makes all things new. Indeed it is true that he who is in Christ in a new creation, the old have passed away (2Cor 5:17).

If you have risen with Jesus Christ there is the stamp of God's radiance upon your face.

A certain convert who had been conned into Christianity by nice promises was being baptised. The priest declared that his baptism will make him a new person and he even gave him a new name as a sign. In that church they had the tradition that they did not eat meat on a Friday. So the next Friday the priest went to visit this new convert and smelled meat cooking. He confronted the young man who declared that it was not meat that he was cooking, but fish. The priest walked to the pot, opened the lid and told him that it was indeed meat. The young man protested, saying, before he cooked it, he baptised it and declared that the meat was now fish. Therefore he was allowed to cook it.

This story illustrates that baptism cannot change you. You will go through baptism the same person you were before you were baptism. Baptism is only the symbol of salvation. If you haven't been saved by the Lord, baptism will not save you. In fact being baptised when you are unsaved makes things worse, for you make a false confession.

Noah built the ark in obedience to God. He put his own plans aside and did as he was told.

Are you continually putting your own plans aside to obey the Lord? How is it with your family? In our days it is like in the days of Noah. People are just living for the world. They are living for pleasure; but you must continually be on your guard to seek and do God's will.

Are you busy making straight your life, parting from your sinful ways and getting right with God as the Lord reveals His ways to you? Maybe you are holding a grudge against someone. You need to get rid of that, bring it to the light and part from it.

Your baptism will be a lie if you keep any of these things in your life while being baptised.

Come out clearly for the Lord Jesus and part from all darkness. Do not be ashamed of Christ, live for Him with all your heart.

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