

Dead to Sin; Alive to God

by Erlo Stegen

Baptism is a public declaration of faith, a sign to others that you've repented of your sins, and it's not a means of salvation, but rather a sign of your faith.

Duration: 55:15

Scripture: Lamentations 4:7, Mark 16:15-18, 1 Timothy 5:22, James 2:17

Topics: "Dead To Sin"

Description

In this sermon, the speaker shares a story about a young doctor who is faced with a difficult situation. The doctor is treating a man who has lost four fingers, but the possibility of recovering the other fingers remains. The speaker questions the lack of integrity in society, where people's promises and words hold no value. The sermon also touches on the issue of people making decisions to accept the Lord when facing death, but often returning to their old ways if they recover. The speaker emphasizes the importance of living a life consistent with one's baptism and warns against hypocrisy. The sermon concludes with a reference to the Bible verse in Mark 16:17, which speaks about the signs that will follow those who believe.

Transcript

We read from Mark 16, from verse 15. And he said to them, go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature. He who believes and is baptized will be saved, but he who does not believe will be condemned.

And these signs will follow those who believe. In my name they will cast out demons, they will speak with new tongues. They will take up serpents, and if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them.

They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover. Let us pray. Lord we thank you for this opportunity to meet like this at this baptism service.

We ask you to be with us now and to bless the reading of thy word. Amen. Today we have a baptism service.

Those who get baptized should be those who are truly discerning. For what is lived by a person is seen and written in books and known in the world and in heaven. And what he testifies by being baptized before people is recorded.

The person's witness by baptism is recorded there. If a person is declaring lies, because he is infatuated with the words baptism, with the word baptism, that one is only bringing a curse upon himself. And demons, especially in this time, is bringing upon himself a curse and demons.

One man of God said, if a person undergoes baptism and then doesn't live true to that statement, his hell will be multiplied. There will be a double hell. That was a Lutheran preacher who would sprinkle children.

He said, if you have undergone infant baptism, the sprinkling of water then, and you don't live a life that is true to that baptism, you will have a double hell. It is a terrible thing that Satan puts his dirty foot into holy things. People like baptism.

But if you enter into it unfitting for it, you must be a washed person, cleansed, and one without rebuke, not that there is something held against you. You must be a washed person, cleansed, and one without rebuke, not that there is something held against you. It hurts me to see so many people making a trivial matter out of nothing.

They treat it as if it was just a light matter. It is a superficial thing for them and they do not reflect the fact that they are a holy temple of God's. It is a superficial thing for them and they do not reflect the fact that they are a holy temple of God's.

It is a superficial thing for them and they do not reflect the fact that they are a holy temple of God's. It is a marked difference. It is a marked difference.

Sometimes I wonder if I should just be so forthright that I mention people by name and say, You, by this name, come to the front. You dress in this way. You come to church regularly like this.

Is this appropriate? Maybe that would shock you out of your sleep because you are fast asleep. This is an evil age on earth. Now I say, these days I say a person who gets baptized should not be one who has recently got converted without there being the evidence of victory.

But in the Bible they got saved and were baptized immediately without the necessity of inspecting their lives. Now it has become necessary for a person to show forth by their life that they have got converted. And I ask God why? Why is it that of old they would get converted and immediately could get baptized but now you don't do it? Now a person has to show their life.

Because people also pretend and lie. And that kills the church of Jesus Christ. Now I say, these days I say a person who gets baptized should not be one who has recently got converted Yesterday at the wedding I told the audience about a story that Miss Newlands recently told the school children about a carpenter who was busy cutting wood when accidentally he suddenly sliced off the fingers of his right hand.

Now I say, these days I say a person who gets baptized should not be one who has recently got converted. And just his thumb was left out. A very communist type of hand I would say where everything must be with sameness, absolutely equal and a hand with different lengths of finger doesn't fit into their picture.

Sameness is never possible. Aren't there fat people and thin people, tall people, short people? The surgeon who was to resuture his fingers was as young as the carpenter was. The saw had been very sharp and had made a very clean cut of his fingers.

He pleaded with the doctor, please help me, please do something for me because I need my right hand, I'm a working man, I have a wife and children, two little children, I need to provide for them. That young doctor was touched. He cross-questioned him and examined him thoroughly with x-rays and that.

Asked lifestyle questions like, do you drink, do you smoke? He said, yes, I do smoke. He said, well, then we cannot resuture your fingers if you are a smoker. The man instantly pulled out his packet of cigarettes, threw it on the floor and said, doctor, I vow that I'll never smoke again.

That young doctor was deeply stirred. He phoned his chief surgeon. He said to him on the phone, look, I'm in a very difficult situation.

I'm in a very difficult situation. I'm in a very difficult situation. I'm in a very difficult position.

Here is a man, he's got a clean cut, lost his four fingers. The four finger looks like it might not be recoverable, but perhaps the others will be. He asked the young surgeon, does he smoke? He said, yes, but he has promised never to ever smoke another cigarette.

We all seem to be schizophrenics. That's the sickness Nebuchadnezzar suffered of. I don't know why.

Do we drink too much tea with too much sugar? Do we eat too many sweets or chocolates? Or were we spoiled as children already and we got too many things, too good clothing? Maybe if we would have walked around in cheaper clothes, we would have been of a better character. I'm asking the question, why? Why? Why? People are so flippant with their vows, not truly meaning and living what they say. If I think back over the last 20 years, people who stood with us who have gone and have gone off the track, I therefore say that we need to see it to believe it.

There is the German saying, one man, one word. There is also another saying that one woman, a dictionary. It is not of a woman who are dictionaries.

You hear me? It is a pity if you are called male simply because you are trousered. You should be called a man because you are masculine, you are male, truly man. The old surgeon spoke words that are very hard.

They were very hard for the younger surgeon because he said, I know them all. Even if they vow not to smoke, they go back to their cigarettes again. And he uttered harsh words.

He said, I am damned if I waste my time on a smoker's fingers. I know them. They say they won't smoke again.

And when they have got their fingers, they smoke. I know them. They say they won't smoke again.

And when they have got their fingers, they smoke. The younger doctor pleaded his case. He said, I am so sympathetic towards this man because he is so young.

He is my age. He needs to have his livelihood. It has to do with his right hand.

He has got little children. Let me try. The older said to the younger, look, it also means, if we go ahead, that it will be a very long, complicated, expensive operation costing many thousands of dollars, not rands.

That's a difficult Zulu word. But for those that learn Zulu, it means uncountable. And it comes from Afrikaans in the olden days when the Boers counted their cattle and they went and said, 20.

All right. The old doctor was finally persuaded and they came, they did the operation. For hours and hours, they sutured his fingers.

On the first day, when they checked, it was still dark. And by the second day, still not very clear. But by the third day, the fourth day, there was a marked difference.

You could see life was coming back into those fingers. And then, days later, it was not only evident to the doctors, but also to him. It is miraculous what doctors can do nowadays.

The wisdom God has given to men. Unless you're a duffer smoker, you're on drugs and drink, of course, you've got no brains at all. On the 10th, they said, you can go home.

He was so glad. After just a little time, a short time later, the wife phoned that young doctor and said, sir, his doctor, his hand has gone black. His fingers have turned black again.

He said, come quickly and look. And indeed, they had turned black again. The blood was no longer circulating.

He said, tell me, sir, have you gone back to smoking? He looked down. He said, yes, I smoked a cigarette. And for 10 days, that was just 10 days after his vow never to return back to tobacco again.

You see the degenerated, perverse generation in which we live. The Bible does say that in the last days, there will be a falling away of believers. Then the younger doctor wondered, what should he tell the older surgeon who had told him not to go ahead? He had tried to stop him, but he went ahead anyway.

They tried to remove the rot, and this time they had to remove even more than where the fingers had been cut because the rot had gone deeper into his hand. He said, I will tell you what to do. I will tell you what to do.

I will tell you what to do. I ask, what type of generation do we live in where a man's word counts for nothing, where what you say and what you promise to do means absolutely nothing to you? It just is beyond me. People helped while they're dying from AIDS.

They come right, and as soon as they're healthy again, go back to their promiscuity where one asks, what is it? What drives them? There is a statistic that 80% of people who are dying make a decision to accept the Lord. And still connected to that percentage, if they get well again, if they recover, 80% of them go back to their past life. They were whiter than the frost or snow.

They were whiter than milk. Their bodies were more red than rubies. Their bodies were more red than rubies.

Their state was like sapphire. Their faces darker than coal. There was a time when their faces were snow white, but now they are found darker than coal.

I ask, what type of generation do we live in where a man's word counts for nothing, where what you say and what you promise to do means absolutely nothing to you? It just is beyond me. I ask, what type of generation do we live in where a man's word counts for nothing, where what you say and what you

promise to do means absolutely nothing to you? It just is beyond me. Is it clear? Yes, yes.

Men, do you hear? Do you hear? I want a clear answer. You young girls, young men, do you hear? Let me continue. You've heard what a person who is baptised ought to be.

That's why we don't like to treat it as a trivial life issue. That's why we don't like to treat it as a trivial life issue. These signs will follow those who believe.

In my name, they will cast out demons. They will speak with new tongues. They will take up serpents.

And if they drink anything deadly, it will by no means hurt them. They will lay hands on the sick and they will recover. Here are the signs that follow believers.

Preceding this, it says, he who believes and is baptised will be saved. But he who does not believe will be condemned. It doesn't say those who are not baptised.

For instance, the thief on the cross was saved by faith. It is not through baptism. The thief on the cross went to heaven but he was not baptised.

The person who says, I'm getting baptised in order to be saved, is lying. Baptism doesn't get you entrance into heaven. Only faith.

If you get baptised, you are making a statement. It is a sign to people saying, I have repented of my sins. If you don't have faith, you don't have the right to be baptised.

There is no baptism excluding faith. It says, and these signs shall follow them. These are the signs that will follow those who believe and are baptised.

You know a jet? If it is very high, you can sometimes not see it. But you can sometimes see it by the trail it leaves of exhaust fumes. Those lines are like pillars.

These lines crisscrossing the skies, especially overseas where it is much more noticeable. The Bible speaks about signs in the heavens above in the last days. The first jet that flew to Durban from Johannesburg, everybody was amazed and scared.

Even where we were at Mbalana, where we stayed, there were phone calls, there were questions. People asked, are we in the last days? Is this the end? Men who were riding bicycles dropped their bicycles and fled into the forests. I still remember what fear and dread there was.

And that plane, I still need to look up exactly when it was, but it was the first plane, the first jet that came, it couldn't land in Durban because the runway wasn't long enough. It turned around and flew back to Johannesburg. But some, as it went by, you could see a glister in the sun.

And some said it might be the tongue of the snake that is up there. So you are followed by something. The believer is followed by something.

Otherwise, you are dead. And here are the works that follow. There is such a thing as twisting the word.

This doesn't encourage you to tempt God. It doesn't encourage you to look for snakes to be bitten by, picking up rocks, trying to find a snake, trying to prove that you are really a believer because the poison doesn't hurt you. The Bible does say, do not tempt God.

If it happens accidentally that you are bitten, do not fear because you are not guilty. I remember a preacher from a certain denomination visited here once at Kwasi Zabantu. I won't say which church, you can think for yourself.

I took him on a tour. We went around and also into the hospital. There was a child as we walked through the hospital that obviously had a disability.

And he pounced upon the child, laying hands on her, vigorously saying, spirit of death and sickness, get out of her. After that, when he had gone, that little child came to me and said, pastor, where does that insane man come from? He said, I don't know. I said, I don't know.

He said, I don't know. I said, I don't know. Shhh! He said, I don't know! He said, I don't know.

I would be glad if I was speaking to those who really listen. Let me end with this, those of you who've been baptized, did you confess the truth or a lie? We've been baptized, have died with Christ, we are saying we've died with Him, we've been buried with Him and now live a resurrected life, ascended with Him. That's what it was like in the Bible, they would get converted, they'd get baptized and they would go forward living for the Lord.

Shall we pray? Thank you Lord for describing clearly in your word how things should be. And Lord we pray for those who are going to be baptized today that there would indeed be good fruit, good results which follow from it. That the miracles of God would follow them and that they would live brand new lives.

Amen.

Audio: <https://sermonindex1.b-cdn.net/15/SID15971.mp3>

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/erlo-stegen/dead-to-sin-alive-to-god/>

Grow in Your Walk with Christ

Listen and read messages that will stir your heart for Christ and point you to deeper repentance and devotion.

- 50,000+ Sermons from speakers past and present
- 3,900+ Classic Christian Books freely readable online
- 1,200+ Bible Translations and Commentaries
- Over 450k forum posts — Join our vibrant online Christian forum

www.sermonindex.net