

Believer's Baptism

by G.W. North

G.W. North emphasizes the significance of believers' baptism as a public declaration of faith and a transformative experience in the life of a Christian.

Duration: 35:41

Scripture: Isaiah 53:8, Matthew 6:33, Acts 8:32-35, Romans 6:3-22

Topics: "Baptism"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the significance of baptism and its connection to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. He describes the physical representation of baptism as being immersed in water, symbolizing the burial of the old self and the resurrection into newness of life. The preacher encourages believers to not just believe in the concept of baptism, but to truly experience it and live out the transformation it represents. He emphasizes the importance of surrendering oneself completely to God and letting go of selfish desires.

Transcript

...this great truth of baptism. Just let's pray, shall we? Glorious Lord, we bless Thee that Thou didst devise a means whereby Thy banished could be restored, and Thou'st come and opened up unto us Thyself, and the way into Thyself. Hallelujah.

We set no store by outward things, Lord. We're in the covenant of inward things, but we bless Thee that Thou hast instituted and installed in Thy Church these wondrous things, so simple, so basic, whereby, Lord, we may show unto men, and unto devils too, if they want to look, and certainly before Thine own eyes, these outward things in which we may take part. Praise Thy name.

So we ask Thee that Thy Spirit being among us, we may, being led by Thee, enter into more than outward things, as we stand with the precious ones who this day, here, go through the waters of baptism. Grant, Father, that we with them may be built up in the holy faith, and glorify Thy name. Lord, Thou applyest the inward things of Calvary to our spirits, and in this we rejoice.

So strengthen and bless everyone, and magnify Thy name, O Lord, as Thou didst that day, when Thou didst cause Thy people to go through the Red Sea and through Jordan. Amen. Baptism is a very, very wonderful thing, and I suppose if I was to take an hour or two, as usual, talking to you on the subject, we would still leave much unsaid.

I want, really, to come to the core of the whole matter. You know, we were speaking of the covenant of circumcision this morning, those of us who were here, and there are those who believe that they should do with their babies, at about a week or a fortnight old, something that they are pleased to call baptism, and use baptism as a substitute for circumcision, or make it stand in the Christian faith where circumcision stood in the Judaistic ritual. Well, beloved, it is not that that I am talking about this afternoon.

I want to talk about believers' baptism, those who really, with faith, personal faith, knowing that nothing can be done by proxy, even by the most devout parents, for us, but that we have to come to real, personal faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And He might be taken the example, as He is the example, and in sample of all things, that demolishes all wrong ideas. For Jesus was circumcised at eight days, but baptized as a man to show that the one did not take the place of the other.

Is that clear? I suppose it must be, really. That's the answer to it all. For if it should have stood true for anyone, it should have stood true for Jesus.

But He chose, as a thirtieth year old man, to be baptized in Jordan in order to fulfil all righteousness. Now, when I was a man, a young man, I was brought up under the sort of idea of following Jesus in baptism. And so, I obediently did this.

I wish somebody had taught me then the real meaning of it all. But this was the kind of idea in which I was brought up. Were you? You know, follow Jesus in baptism.

It sounds so good. But when I was baptized, I didn't really know what it meant. I had the thrill of believing that I'd been obedient.

But there's so much more than knowing that you've been obedient to the Lord. It's always a wonderful thing to obey the Lord, whether it entails going into water or not. But baptism has been chosen by the Lord Jesus Christ himself, by God, as the picture of so much that the Lord accomplished for us in the spiritual realm.

I suppose we couldn't do better than turn to Romans chapter 6. If I may refer back to the person of the Lord Jesus, this may help so many people. I don't know. When the Lord Jesus said, it behoves us to fulfil all righteousness, you see, he fulfilled the righteousness of the old covenant as a baby.

He fulfilled the righteousness of the new covenant His mother did that for him. But he had to fulfill the righteousness of the new covenant. And that is why he didn't rely on having the ordinances of the old performed upon him and say, well, we've fulfilled all righteousness, that's done the right thing and so on and so on.

When he became a man, he put away the childish thing, if I may adapt that phrase. And he went into this glorious example for us. He would not begin his own public ministry until he'd been baptized in water publicly.

As a man, I wish everybody else would follow in the steps of our Lord Jesus Christ, as we are exhorted in the scripture. Whether or not we have an explanation for doing so, isn't always the point. Sophistry and philosophy do not take the place of sheer, simple, childlike obedience.

And this is what the Lord is expecting of us. I read in Romans 6, know ye not, verse 3, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death. Now, this is not a water baptism.

Of course, it's a spiritual baptism. When you were baptized into Jesus Christ, you 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. And here we have the picture of water baptism brought in as an illustration of the spiritual baptism. We, when we are baptized into Jesus Christ, we are baptized into his death.

We are not baptized into his agonizing moments on the cross. We are baptized into the moment of his death. The agonizing suffering for sin was his and his alone.

The atonement we can have no part in. We can have part with it. It can be ministered unto us, and it is in the Spirit, but in the atoning act, in the redemptive work, that is Jesus Christ's and Jesus Christ's alone.

You must not ever touch it. You must let him have the glory. But we are allowed, and this is the only way God himself could do it, having atoned for all sin, having redeemed us with his blood.

God could do no other than this. It wouldn't have been just. It could not have been righteous or of God unless it had happened this way.

We are now allowed by the Spirit to come into the moment of his death, for that was the precise moment when all was cleared away and the door was wide open. Hallelujah. And we are, this is what we're all saying this afternoon, whether we're partaking or whether we are watching, whether you have been baptized or whether you yet have to be baptized, here we're seeing the moment, the point of entrance into the glories of Calvary.

We can get the benefits of it. You can get forgiveness. You can get all sorts of things from it, but there comes a moment when you experience it.

Hallelujah. You come in there, and that, and that alone is the gateway to life eternal. We're in.

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. Amen. Death.

Resurrection. Death, first of all, to myself. My old man, look, let's have a look at it.

It's in this verse six. We know that our old man is crucified with him, that the body of sin might be destroyed, that henceforth we should not serve sin. And you see, and until your old man, you know that your old man is crucified, you will serve sin.

You will be a slave to sin until this takes place in your spiritual experience. There is no way out of it. Praying can't do it.

Taking communion can't do it. Self-flagellations can't do it. Fastings can't do it.

All these are works. They may be very good works. They may be, in some cases, necessary works.

But beloved, the whole glorious point is that I come in here to the point where I want to stop being a slave to sin. That's right. I want sin, if I have it at all, to be an exception in my life, not the habit.

I don't want it at all. I need not have it at all. Glory be to God.

But if I do sin, I have the Advocate with the Father, but I want it to be such an exception that it'll be most remarkable. That's it. I don't want it to be at all, and don't let anyone in this room think that they're bound to keep on sinning until they die.

You will keep on sinning until you come to the spiritual death, but when you meet the spiritual death in all its glorious power, this overwhelming death of Jesus, when you come in here, beloved, you will be raised into such a life that you'll sort of look back on the old and say, well now, fancy, I used to do that. I used to think that. I used to go here.

I used to be with that crowd. You see, but glory be to the name of the Lord. There's a door opened into life and a door shut against death.

Amen. And God wants us to see this, that our old man is crucified with Christ. I am brought into the point of release, the moment of release, not the agony of the crucifixion.

Hallelujah. I am introduced at the point of departure. I'm baptized into his death.

Hallelujah. Do you believe that? Well, you're bound to if you believe the Bible. Are you experiencing it? That you believe in the moment of his death.

Can you see it? You who've been tortured, agonized, struggling against yourself and your proneness to sin and your drawings to this person or that thing or your practice of this habit. Know this, beloved, that there is a moment of death. Not you just believing it, but you experiencing it.

Believing is the handmade of experience. And you are to come into this glorious place where it all ends. We're actually going to a funeral.

I mean, in its enactment. Now, down the bank, it's a deep, deep old ravine there. Let it be ever so deep.

Amen. Buried and gone. Finished with.

It's my testimony when I come up out of those waters to everybody that I am alive unto God. Amen. I am alive from the dead.

Praise the name of the Lord. Oh, what a wonderful thing when you can look back on the past and say it's gone. It's cut off.

Amen. Walking in newness of life. See what this chapter says.

People don't really believe this chapter, you know. If they believe this chapter, we'd have a different race of people on the earth called Christians. Here they are.

It says this. Verse 18. Being then made free from sin.

How many of you really believe that? You sure you don't mean being made free from the power of sin? Do you believe it means made free from sin? You better read your Bible. Most people don't believe that. They believe it means being made free from the power of sin.

They've written a Bible of their own. Beware of it. Go on, you better read.

You mustn't take anything I say as true if it isn't written in the book. And don't take anything that anybody else says is true if it isn't written in the book. Made free from sin.

You can let your mind range over all the truth of that. Let it sink into you like new wine. This is the wine that's been squeezed from our Lord Jesus Christ.

Amen. Let it run through your being. Let it electrify you, galvanize you.

Let it bring hopeful life to you. Let it be the wine of heaven made free from sin. Hallelujah.

Glory. Amen. Glory to God.

Being then made free from sin. I love these blessed tenses. Being then.

When. When you believe from the heart. When you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered to you.

Verse 17. That's when it happened. Do you know the real doctrine of the Lord Jesus of the gospel was cast in the mold of the person of Jesus Christ.

Not merely in words. It's come, it's molded from the person, from the character, from the life, from the words, from the deeds of Jesus. If you've got a doctrine that isn't molded from there, get rid of it.

Was he free from sin? You've been baptized into Jesus Christ. That's what we read. As many of you as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into his death.

Bless him. Calvary is the way into him. Glory.

When I'm in him, I say, oh Lord, you're free from sin. And he says, yes, you're in me, remember. You're in me.

I'm in the place of freedom from sin. I'm in my Jesus. Is it wonderful to let myself go and think his thoughts free from sin.

Isn't it wonderful to let my feelings go in feelings that are free from sin. Isn't it marvelous to have a renewed personality. Isn't it wonderful to let my tongue go and words free from sin.

Isn't it wonderful to let my habits start to form free from sin. Isn't it marvelous. You say this is new birth.

Of course it is. Amen. Baptized into Jesus Christ.

It's the only way to get into him. You have to be baptized into him. The way is unknown except in the spirit.

He will immerse you into the secret Calvary. All the open Calvary was a couple of pieces of wood, an old jagged tree tongue. Nothing like these smoothly planed up and nicely polished things that people stick up in churches, you know, beautifully done and or hang on their watch chains or on the end of some beads.

Nothing like that. It was an ugly, rough, old tree tongue. The worse, the better.

The more you could hurt him, the better. Stick him on that. Impale him.

That's right. They saw the outward thing. They still saw it there.

They just saw a man dying. That's all they saw. But we've been baptized into the inner secrets, the plans of God, the thing that God has devised, baptized into him.

Why? Talk about walking in newness of life. Are you in him? Are you there? Have you discovered this newness? Is this what we're testifying to this afternoon? When I obeyed from the heart, I had no reservations. I let myself go entirely.

I did not politely believe any more than Jesus politely died. Amen. I believe with the coming of all my being.

I believe with an opening of my bowels. I believed with a giving of my entire self. Have you done this? Oh God, I believe.

Hallelujah. Total release of all my inward powers. Then you won't read so many books about spiritual release when you really get your believing right.

Not that some of them haven't got some good advice in, but some of you ought to have done this 50 years ago. The whole tremendous thing about it, beloved, is that I'm then made free from sin and I let my eyes run down the chapter and I find it again. Verse 22, the tense has changed.

But now being made free from sin. There it is. There was a then and a now.

Amen. Now made free from sin. My, this is glorious.

This is that newness of life. Oh, the other was oldness of death. The other newness of life.

That the world's finished. Self is finished. The old man's finished.

The flesh is finished. Glory be to God. This touchy self has gone.

This great big, big, justful, statistic self has gone. This that must have the attention. This must be the center of the picture.

This must be noticed or I'll die. It's all gone. Hallelujah.

This wondrous, free, glorious self. Buried. I've been buried.

And of course, just to sort of make sure, beloved, that it's not a sort of an in and out business, because when we go down there and we watch these girls this afternoon, if our two brethren have mercy on them, they'll put them in and out quickly because it's a very cold river. Not that they'll feel cold. They'll be so warm inside, they'll not feel the cold.

The brethren will, but the sisters won't. But just to make sure that we don't go in and out of this. This is the tragedy with so many.

There's a verse here and it says this. Oh, it's a precious verse, this. In verse five, if we've been planted together in the likeness of his death.

See, planted. Amen. Now, you know why you plant things, don't you? So they'll stay there.

I mean, if you plant a tree out in the middle of that lawn tomorrow, you won't expect to get up in the morning and find it's planted out somewhere along the drive, because it's been planted there. What a genius God is. May I call him that? What a wonder he is.

Planted. You're going to have your roots in this death. You're going to draw the very life of you from this death.

You're planted there, fixed there. It's not, oh, there she is again. She was all right last week.

Now look at her. See? Oh dear. Look at him.

He said his old man was crucified yesterday. Listen to him today. And all this business.

Hallelujah. Planted. Planted together in the likeness of that death.

We also shall be in the likeness of his resurrection. Is this a precious thing, beloved? Every day has to be this. Rise in to a new glorious day with the Lord.

Walking in newness of life every day with Jesus, sweeter than the day before. And the Lord wants us to be here. This is our testimony.

It isn't just the testimony that Jesus has forgiven me my sins by the riches of his grace. It isn't just the testimony that I'm wanting to be obedient and follow the Lord in baptism. It is the testimony that my old man was crucified with him.

Hallelujah. And I'm rising up with every power within me and say, and a good job too. And hallelujah.

I hated him. I was his slave. I had to do as he said.

He was the devil's representative, the very man of sin. But Jesus was made the man of sin. He was made sin for me on that cross.

And he died as me that I should come out of this very clutch of the devil and I should live free from him. Amen. Lord, this is a marvelous thing.

Are you all rejoicing in this? Yeah. Really rejoicing in this? Now this is what it's going to be. You can't be a baptized person and give a testimony to this and then flirt and fling and fiddle about with the world anymore.

You can't do that. It's living entirely under the Lord. You know, there was a man once, he was an Ethiopian.

I've got to stop myself because it's a great subject and I'd like to carry on with it for another hour. There was a man once, he was an Ethiopian and he traveled up to Jerusalem and he bought some Old Testament scriptures. He was riding in a chariot.

He was returning from the feast. He was reading the book and God saw him and he instructed Philip to go out into the desert and to meet this chariot. And he came and he joined himself to the chariot and he said to the man, this Ethiopian who was reading in the book, he said, do you understand what you're reading? He said, how can I accept someone guides me? So Philip went up into the chariot and the place where he was reading was about the Lord in Isaiah 53, how that he was cut off out of the land of the living.

You see, you remember this place to you that Jesus was cut off out of the land and he said, who was the prophet speaking of himself or some other man? Philip opened his mouth and preached unto him, Jesus, just preached Jesus. And when they came along and there was some water there and the Ethiopian said, he said, see here is water. What do you mean to be baptized? Philip said, if I believe this with all my heart, I must.

Because you see, this man came to see in one brief talk by a spirit baptized and filled Christian. Now remember this, this is the secret of bringing people to truth shortly. Amen.

A man led of the spirit, full of the spirit, ministering Jesus. That's all that comes out of his mouth. When he gets hold of the scriptures, if he's full of the spirit, he says, Jesus, amen.

And he ministers Jesus and nobody else can, they can talk about him in all the sort of prescribed texts, but to minister him is an entirely different thing. And this man, his reasoning went A to B. Here it is, Jesus was cut off out of the land of the living. Well, then I want to be, let's have some water.

It says cut off, dead, buried. Hallelujah. Walking, living, moving in newness of life.

Is that what you want? I'm not asking for candidates for baptism. But what does hinder you to be baptized? Tradition? Thinking that it's anabaptism or something? You know, these sort of technical words. It's nothing of the sort.

It's a great positive opening up of your soul, realizing the truth and saying, Lord, here am I. Amen. You do what the Lord says you should do. Walk in his footsteps and glorify him.

Amen. Let's pray. Jesus, Lord, thou art perfect.

We can't improve on thee. We come humbly before thee that thou shouldst accept our great gratitude. Lord, we almost feel that we're unworthy to speak to thee.

Thy overwhelming love, thy tremendous grace, thy great compassion, without giving one hint of condescension, thou lover of our souls, we bless thee that we're given the privilege of being baptized into thy death, the supreme death, the death that ends all death, the new death. We bless thee. Hallelujah.

Bless these children, Lord, who this day, in obedience to thee, do this thing. Grant unto them that with high purpose, walking with thee, they may prove the newness of the life of Jesus, filling them, thrilling them, in their members that once were empowered and enslaved to sin, in their members now, that the long habits of life should be broken, and the tendency of them now be toward righteousness, holiness, all the glory of God. So we commit unto thee, thanking thee for this opportunity, that by meditation in the truth, thy spirit should bring us again to the wonder of heaven and earth, the glory of God and men, even Calvary.

Thank you, Father. Amen.

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