

Expository Thoughts On Luke - Luke 3:21-38

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Transcript

THE BAPTISM AND GENEALOGY OF JESUS

We see in the passage before us, the high honor the Lord Jesus has put on baptism. We find that among others who came to John the Baptist, the Savior of the world came, and was "baptized."

An ordinance which the Son of God was pleased to use, and afterwards to appoint for the use of His whole Church, ought always to be held in peculiar reverence by His people. Baptism cannot be a thing of slight importance, if Christ Himself was baptized. The use of baptism would never have been enjoined on the Church of Christ, if it had been a mere outward form, incapable of conveying any blessing.

It is hardly necessary to say that errors of every sort and description abound on the subject of baptism. Some make an idol of it, and exalt it far above the place assigned to it in the Bible. Some degrade it and dishonor it, and seem almost to forget that it was ordained by Christ Himself. Some limit the use of it so narrowly that they will baptize none unless they are grown up, and can give full proof of their conversion. Some invest the baptismal water with such magic power, that they would like missionaries to go into heathen lands and baptize all people, old and young indiscriminately, and believe that however ignorant the heathen may be, baptism must do them good. On no subject, perhaps, in religion, have Christians more need to pray for a right judgment and a sound mind.

Let it suffice us to hold firmly the general principle, that baptism was graciously intended by our Lord to be a help to His Church, and "a means of grace," and that, when rightly and worthily used, we may confidently look upon it for a blessing. But let us never forget that the grace of God is not tied to any sacrament, and that we may be baptized with water, without being baptized with the Holy Spirit.

We see, secondly, in this passage, the close connection that ought to exist between the administration of baptism and prayer. We are specially told by Luke, that when our Lord was baptized He was also "praying."

We need not doubt that there is a great lesson in this fact, and one that the Church of Christ has too much overlooked. We are meant to learn that the baptism which God blesses must be a baptism accompanied by prayer. The sprinkling of water is not sufficient. The use of the name of the blessed Trinity is not enough. The form of the sacrament alone conveys no grace. There must be something else beside all this. There must be "the prayer of faith." A baptism without prayer, it may be confidently asserted, is a baptism on which we have no right to expect God's

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