

ROMANS SIX, FOUR

Intro: Since we have had a baptismal service tonight, I want to speak on the meaning of baptism.

These who know the teaching of Scripture realize that baptism does not save; IT DOES NOT EVEN HELP SAVE. Salvation in the OT and in the NT is always on the basis of faith in Christ alone.

But baptism is symbolic of that which has happened to every believer, that which took place in each of our lives the very moment we received Jesus Christ as our Savior.

In order to understand its full significance as it relates to us, there are several passages which we need to read:

- 1) Matt. 3:13-17.
- 2) Matt. 20:22, 23; Mark 10:38, 39.
- 3) Luke 12:50.

These passages should make it clear, as Paul states in Rom. 6, that baptism brings before us a death and burial--especially the death and burial of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Another point that we need to recognize here is this: That Christ died for our sins. Cf. 1 Cor. 15:3. BUT THIS DOES NOT MEAN JUST FOR THE PENALTY WHICH WAS OURS BECAUSE OF OUR SIN; IT MEANS THAT HE DIED TO TAKE CARE OF THE EFFECT OF OUR SINS AS IT RELATES TO THE PRESENT, THE PAST, AND THE FUTURE.

It is the present which Paul is concerned about in Romans 6. "Shall we continue in sin . . .?" (Rom. 6:1).

What Paul is seeking to show is that such a thing is not only unnecessary; IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

This is among some of the deepest truth that we will find in the Word of God. We need to know it, but we do not need to understand how it all can be true--that a death 2,000 years ago before we were ever born or had ever sinned could have such amazing results in our lives today. But it can. Let us note the details that are given to us here in this verse.

I. CHRIST'S DEATH WAS OUR DEATH: "Therefore, we are buried with Him by baptism into death."

It would be better if we translated it, We were buried . . . It is all in the past. It is not something which we have done; it was done for us by God Himself.

Therefore, DO NOT WASTE ANY OF YOUR TIME TRYING TO BE CRU-

CIFIED OR BURIED; THAT HAS ALREADY HAPPENED TO ALL OF US. IT HAPPENED WHEN CHRIST DIED, AND WE ENTERED INTO IT WHEN WE RECEIVED THE LORD JESUS CHRIST AS OUR SAVIOR.

Water baptism pictures this.

- II. CHRIST'S RESURRECTION WAS OUR RESURRECTION: "that like as Christ was raised up from (among) the dead (ones) by the glory of the Father."

We, of course, know that we have not yet experienced physical resurrection. Our bodies have not been changed, as the Lord has His body changed on the morning of the resurrection. BUT, SPIRITUALLY, WE CAN EVEN NOW BENEFIT FROM THAT RESURRECTION. Cf. Eph. 1:19-23.

"The glory of the Father" here is the display of His power-- showing Him to be sovereign over death and the grave AND SIN!

- III. CHRIST'S LIFE IS OUR LIFE: "even so we also should walk in newness of life."

The "we" is emphatic.

We have been baptized into His death, i.e., we share permanently in His death. But we also share permanently and presently in His resurrection.

Cf. Rom. 6:5-7.

Just as Jesus Christ will never again be what He was when He went to the Cross, was crucified, and buried, SO WE WILL NEVER BE THE SAME AGAIN AFTER WE HAVE TRUSTED HIM AS OUR SAVIOR. The results are to be seen now. Not only is it unnecessary for us to live in sin; it is impossible!

This does not mean that we are sinless.

No, but it does mean that we are forever different. "Newness" means new in quality. Cf. 2 Cor. 5:17.

AND THE CHANGE WILL BE EVIDENT IN OUR WALK. This is our life thought of as individual steps.

Concl: Baptism does not do any of this for us. If we have not trusted the Lord, none of these things are true of us. But once we have come to the Lord, all of this is true of us. And when a child of God is baptized in water, he is simply showing in this symbolic way what Christ has done for him and what we can expect of him. The old bondage to sin is gone, and will never come back again. In its place we have a new life in which we may sin, but in which we do not have to sin.

Note the following passages:

- 1) 2 Cor. 13:4,
 "For though he was crucified through weakness, yet he liveth by the power of God. For we also are weak in him, but we shall live with him by the power of God toward you."
- 2) Col. 3:1-4,
 "If (or, since) ye, then, be risen with Christ, seek these things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead (or, ye died), and your life is hidden with Christ in God. When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory."
- 3) 2 Tim. 2:11,
 "It is a faithful saying: For if (or, since) we be dead (or, died) with him, we shall also live with him."
- 4) 1 Pet. 2:24, speaking of Christ, Peter writes,
 "Who his own self bore our sins in his own body on the tree, that we, being dead to sins (or, having died to sins), should live unto righteousness; by whose stripes ye were healed."

What a glorious salvation we have . . .

- from sin's penalty,
- from sin's power, and
- eventually, from sin itself--its very presence in our lives.