

Remnant Life Church
April 15, 2018
The Ordinance of Baptism
Romans 6:1-10

Sunday, May 6 – first baptism service for RLC

- The final words of Jesus are ones that have given direction to the Church since that very day
 - If you knew what you were going to say to a family member or close friend would be the last thing you would ever say to them...
 - It would not be something frivolous and without value or meaning –
 - ‘be sure to watch more TV’
 - Or something obvious – ‘try to get enough sleep each night’
 - It would be something of importance and usefulness
 - Say I love you to the important people in your life
 - Work is not the most important thing
 - So the last words of Jesus that He would speak to His disciples should be understood to be of tremendous importance

Matt 28:19-20 - Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you...

What is baptism?

What is baptism not?

Why should we be baptized?

- Baptism is one of the three ordinances of the protestant church – baptism, communion, and foot washing
 - We do these because Jesus demonstrated them and commanded us to do the first two
 - The catholic church believes in and practices seven called sacraments
- Ordinance – an authoritative decree or direction
 - In local government it is often used with the word zoning – a zoning ordinance
 - In the church it is also where we get the word ordained
 - To be set apart by authoritative decree
 - Jesus is the authoritative word for baptism, communion, and foot washing

READ – Romans 6:1-10

What is Baptism?

- The word baptism comes from the Greek *baptisma* which is the verbal form of *baptizo*
- Baptism within the church has taken more than one form
 - There is sprinkling and pouring

- But the word baptism means to immerse; or put fully under (water)
- More importantly there is the example of Jesus
- **Mark 1:9-10** - *At that time Jesus came from Nazareth in Galilee and was baptized by John in the Jordan. Just as Jesus was coming up out of the water, he saw heaven being torn open and the Spirit descending on him like a dove.*
- Even within this definition there lies differing views of how it should be done
 - At RLC we believe in and practice ‘believer’s baptism’ (talk more on that...)
 - Many practice infant baptism in order to wash away the inherent guilt of sin from a child “born into sin” (**Ps 51:5** – sinful at birth)
 - Age of Accountability – no direct scriptural reference but thought to be based on the age of 13 in the Jewish culture when a boy becomes a man
 - It varies from person to person – maturity and understanding
- What is Baptism - it is a proclamation!
 - It proclaims your faith, your allegiance, your commitment publicly to Jesus Christ
 - This is done through a symbolic joining with what Jesus did (**Rom 6**)
 - Jesus died for our sins to pay the penalty
 - His death and resurrection cleansed us from all our unrighteousness (**I John 1:9**)
 - When you are submerged and then brought up out of the water you are symbolically joining in the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ
 - It is a visible sign of God’s mercy and grace in that He died for you and saved you from your sins
 - It is also a permanent seal of your intent to commit your life to following Jesus
 - You will always remember the circumstances of that very important moment in your spiritual life
 - It is also a proclamation of your intent and desire to die to yourself and reemerge a different person because of what Jesus did for you
 - Within that proclamation is an act of warfare against satan
 - Struggles with sinful acts or thoughts
 - Nagging memories of the past
 - Persistent self-doubt
 - All of those are symbolically washed away by the waters of baptism for the Christian who understands the power of this act of obedience.

What is Baptism Not?

- Baptism is not an act that brings forgiveness of sins or salvation
- Another word we use to describe salvation is regeneration (being made new)
 - That only comes through confessing your sins, believing in the name of Jesus, and asking Him to come into your life to by your Lord and living your life for Him
- You do not need to be baptized to be saved BUT you must be saved in order to be baptized
 - This is what is meant as “believers baptism”

- If you are baptized but do not know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, the only thing you are doing is getting wet
- What is most important to understand is...
 - You are not being baptized to be forgiven for your sins
 - You are not being baptized as a requirement of a church (RLC or anyone else)
 - You are not being baptized because of your family or friends
 - You are being baptized solely on the basis of your profession of faith in Jesus Christ
- Now it is taught in some churches that baptism is necessary for you to be saved – that is not true
 - Jesus' first recorded words of ministry in *Mark 1:15* - "*The time has come,*" he said. "*The kingdom of God has come near. **Repent and believe** the good news!"*
 - Paul and Silas in prison (*Acts 16*) - *Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved...*
 - Paul in his letter to the church in Rome - *If you declare with your mouth, "Jesus is Lord," and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. (Rom. 10:9)*
 - Only one act brings salvation and it is not based on something that you do it is what was done for you
 - Our responsibility is to confess our sins and believe in the name of Jesus Christ

Why Should We Be Baptized?

- As we said earlier baptism is a representation of the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ – baptism is a picture of all that
 - It is a picture of someone very important
 - When we recall that moment we are baptized we remember the reason why and, more importantly, who it is about
 - We proclaim to the world that we too are dying to the old of our lives and that we are resurrected to a new life through the power of what was done for us by Jesus
 - Baptism makes a bold and daring statement about you
 - John the Baptist baptized people in the Jordan river – a very public spectacle that left no doubt of what you were doing
 - This could prove to be very dangerous to the Jews who were, in essence, turning their backs on what they were raised to believe
 - Today we are in relative anonymity but it still declares three things about you
 1. You have given your life to Jesus as His follower
 2. You are committing yourself to the process of discipleship (growing in your faith)
 3. An ongoing transformation is taking place in your life and people will see that in how you live, how you act, and how you speak

So, what should that look like for a follower, an imitator of Jesus Christ who has made a public declaration of baptism?

- Jesus loved the undeserving – and now so should you
- Jesus forgave undeserving people – and now so should you
- Jesus refused to flirt around with sin – and now so should you
- Jesus was absolutely committed to the life of the cross – and so are you