

The Spiritual Implications of Water Baptism

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COLOSSIANS 2:9-15

- ⁹ *For in Him dwelleth all the fullness of the Godhead bodily.*
¹⁰ *And ye are complete in Him, which is the head of all principality and power:*
¹¹ *In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh, by the circumcision of Christ:*
¹² *Buried with Him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with Him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised Him from the dead.*
¹³ *And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath He quickened together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,*
¹⁴ *Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to His cross;*
¹⁵ *And, having spoiled principalities and powers, He made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it. [That is in the cross.]*

My message this evening is 'The Spiritual Implications of Water Baptism'. The Apostle Paul likens baptism in the New Testament to the ritual of circumcision in the Old. He said it was the 'putting off, the body of the sins of the flesh'. He said it was the circumcision of Christ, 'the cutting away' of those sins of the flesh, which are natural to those who do not know the Lord.

Water baptism is likened to death and burial. It is a burial with Christ. That means an association or identifying oneself with Christ in His death and in His resurrection. Death, in the natural, is the conclusion of all relationships on earth with living human beings. Even the marriage contract is 'until death do us part'. There is nothing more definite, more conclusive, and more decisive, than death. It cancels all obligations, all legal contracts, and all debts. After death, all our debts are cancelled. The maximum penalty that the law can demand of a criminal is the death sentence. Death is the cancellation of all contracts, all relationships, and all debts on earth. Water baptism is likened to death of everything that is past: of all your past, all your legal debts towards God. All Satan's relationship with you, all his power over you, is broken in that act of water baptism. Somebody say Amen!

Christ our Lord died a very painful death on the cross. Through it, He paid all man's sins. He cancelled and terminated all of man's obligations to the law.

HEBREWS 10:14-18

- ¹⁴ *For by one offering He hath perfected forever them that are sanctified.*
¹⁵ *Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us; for after that He said before,*
¹⁶ *This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put My laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;*
¹⁷ *And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.*
¹⁸ *Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.*

Christ made one sacrifice forever, and He paid the sin debt of every person who has ever lived, or ever will live. The penalty of the law brought a death sentence – the Bible says the day that you sin you shall surely die. Now Christ took that sentence, that penalty, that judgment, the maximum penalty. Jesus on the cross took your sin, my sin, and He paid the maximum penalty, and that was death. Some owe a little, some owe much, but having nothing to pay, we have to go to Christ. He is the only One who can pay man's sins because He had none of His own. By one offering, Christ purchased for us total absolution and total pardon. God's laws had been broken and trampled upon. God's divine justice had suffered. God had been dishonoured by man's sin. Justice demanded a penalty. There cannot be justice if sin can go on unpunished. It is impossible for God to be just and not punish sin, and not keep His Word – the day you sin you die.

Now that death was not merely physical, it was spiritual. It meant that we were cut off, separated, alienated, from the source of life. God is the source of life. He is the energy source of the world. When man is cut off from God, he begins dying. There are many symptoms of that death; we see them all around us in a corrupt, decaying, dying society. The world is dying because it has been cut off from God. Jesus said, "He that heareth My word, and believeth on Him that sent Me, hath everlasting life." (JOHN 5:24) That is a quality of life, a new life that God puts within us through the Spirit of His Son.

Tonight I have eternal life. If you have received Jesus, you have eternal life abiding in you. That eternal life is manifested as love. If there is love in your heart towards your brethren, you have eternal life. If there is no love in your heart towards your brethren, you do not have eternal life, you dwell in darkness.

Now God was just, and so sin demanded a judgment, but God is also merciful and He wanted to save the sinner. How could He satisfy the demands of justice and at the same time forgive the sinner? There was only one answer and God found it, and that is called substitution. He that knew no sin became sin. Jesus became sin on the cross. Not only did He pay for our sin, He became sin. He took your sin and mine, every one of them, in His own sinless body. John the Baptist said, "*Behold the Lamb of God, who taketh away the sin of the world.*" (JOHN 1:29) The angels said, "*and thou shalt call His name Jesus; for He shall save His people from their sins.*" (MAT 1:21) In Isaiah we read, "*therefore, with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of Yeshuwa.*" (ISA 12:3) – Yeshuwa is the Hebrew name for Jesus – with joy shall we draw water, the water of life, from the well of Jesus. Hallelujah!

The divine blow was coming upon the human race, and Jesus interposed His own body. For example, if a car is coming and you are not aware of it, and you are about to be struck, and someone that loves you very much throws his body before you and saves you. That is what Jesus did for the human race. He interposed His own life to save us from the wrath of God. What we deserved He took, that we might have eternal life in Him. Now, regardless of all that God has done for us, unless we accept that, it is ineffective. If the sinner is still in love with iniquity, if he still loves darkness, there remains no more sacrifice for sin. When man sins wilfully and willingly against light, his only end is to remain in darkness. When in his heart there is rebellion and animosity towards God, he commits spiritual suicide, rejecting God's offer of friendship and reconciliation. Sin is no longer the problem; the problem now is the sinner. Will he accept God's terms? Will he accept God's way? Will he submit to God's will? Will he reject the rebellion from his heart? Will he turn in love towards God instead of animosity?

So the Bible says whosoever will may come, if any man thirst let him come, he that will let him come. Do you want to come? This is what happens when you come willingly to Jesus Christ. Read with me Colossians 1:13. Now I want you to take hold of this. If not, you cannot fight the spiritual warfare. Take hold of this scripture, memorise it, put it in your heart, put it on as a coat. It is very important.

*"Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness,
and hath translated us into the kingdom of His dear Son."*

COLOSSIANS 1:13

Two kingdoms. Some of you are still under the power of darkness. You are in this church, but there is darkness all over you. In your heart there is rebellion and unbelief, there is sin staining your soul. You are under the kingdom of darkness, under the power of darkness, under Satan's dominion. However, most of you have been translated from the kingdom of darkness, you have received the 'inheritance of the saints in light'. Water baptism is the sign that you have ended with the old kingdom and you have begun in the kingdom of God's dear Son.

Baptism signifies many things; let us take two quickly. Firstly, it means we enter into the death of Christ; we identify ourselves with Christ in His death. You accept death as yours. He is your substitute. You accept the fact that you are worthy of eternal death, and that Jesus took your place as your substitute. He died specifically for you. If there were nobody else in the world, He would have died for you. He took your place. He is now your advocate. He is praying for you. He died for you. He lives for you. He intercedes for you. That is what water baptism means: you accept the fact that Jesus is your substitute. You recognise that it was because of your transgressions and your iniquities that He was bruised and beaten beyond recognition, and hung on a cross to die. For me, He did it. For you, He did it. When you are baptized, you enter into that death and into that resurrection.

There must, of course, be repentance. Peter says, "*Repent, and be baptized.*" (ACTS 2:38) First repentance, then baptism. Baptism is a sign of repentance. It is a sign that you have turned away from your sin. You have turned towards God, and you begin to live a Christian life. Secondly, baptism indicates a severance with any relationship that is not of Him. When you begin a relationship with Christ, you must turn your back on the world. It is a death to self, for the Bible says 'that we are dead and buried.' That means you and me. The 'old man', with his old rebellious ideas, is buried. The Apostle Paul said, "*I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me.*" (GAL 2:20) Crucified with Christ, resurrected with Christ. We are still living, but not the old man, the 'new man'; the old man is buried. Whenever temptation comes – and it will come – you remember what the Bible says, 'I am dead to sin, I am alive unto God'.

ROMANS 6:1-9

- ¹ *What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin, that Grace may abound?*
- ² *God forbid. How shall we, that are dead to sin, live any longer therein?*
- ³ *Know ye not, that so many of us as were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death?*
- ⁴ *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.

⁵ *For if we have been planted together in the likeness of His death, we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection:*

⁶ *Knowing this, that our old man is crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be destroyed...*

The body of sin is the old man. It does not mean the physical; it means everything you were before Christ, that is destroyed. The physical body is not destroyed, but that old man is. The old man that was you before Jesus, he's buried. He is no longer to rule, to govern, to control; Jesus is now Lord. That means the old man is no longer the master – Jesus is master.

... that henceforth we should not serve sin.

⁷ *For he that is dead is freed from sin.*

⁸ *Now if we be dead with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him:*

⁹ *Knowing that Christ being raised from the dead dieth no more; death hath no more dominion over Him.*

You see if we are dead, we are freed from sin. Paul is saying: Jesus died and He rose from the grave. Death has no more power over Him any longer. He is not under that realm any longer. He went beyond death. Therefore, Paul is saying in a similar sense: all our debts have been cancelled. We have been buried with Christ, and sin no longer has any rights over us. We can sin. It is possible to sin and it is probable that many will sin, but we do not have to continue in sin. God forbid.

Now in verse eleven he says, "*Likewise, reckon ye also yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin.*" I believe that many times we open the door to sin because we do not 'reckon ourselves dead'. We believe that we are going to sin. We believe that we are subject to temptation and we realise how weak we are. In addition, we do not reckon upon an historic fact: that we were buried in water baptism. We look back to that every time the Devil tries to bring us back again into bondage. Hallelujah!

We must present ourselves unto the Lord. It is important that you do that tonight even if you were baptized before – that you present your body unto God. That you present your spirit unto God. That you present your soul unto God. You present your life unto God. You present your future in His hands. Do you think you can do that? Is that possible in your heart? If you cannot, I wonder if you are a Christian. Can you from your heart say, "*I present my body unto God?*" That breaks all relationship with the enemy. "*I present my soul to God. I present my spirit to God. I present my life to God. I present my talents to God. I present my strength to God. I present my future to God.*"

Isn't that wonderful to be able to say that? Can you say that, in your heart? Hallelujah! Willingly, voluntarily, cut off all relationships with this sinful world that violate your covenant with Jesus Christ. Break all relationships with the god of this world, and now you serve the lowly Nazarene. That is what baptism means: I am dead unto sin, I am alive unto God.

"For sin shall not have dominion over you."

ROMANS 6:14

Can you say that phrase? "*Sin shall not have dominion over me.*" You see, sin and the Devil are related: you want to be freed from the Devil, be freed from sin. Whether you feel like it or not, we are confessing an historic fact: we have been baptized into His death. We have come into a covenant relationship with God through Christ. The Israelites were baptized into the cloud as they passed through the Red Sea – the Red Sea is symbolic of water baptism and the cloud is symbolic of the Holy Spirit. When we are saved, we are baptized by one Spirit into the Body of Christ. As they were baptized into Moses, we are baptized into the Body of Christ. We pass the Red Sea, which was a dividing line between Egypt and the New Canaan Land, thus we come out of slavery to Satan. We come out of spiritual slavery, and we enter into spiritual freedom. By going through the Red Sea, going through water baptism, we break all relationship with Egypt and with Pharaoh, which means the world and the Devil. Somebody say Amen!

Satan no longer has dominion over us. Our bodies go into the water, that is a circumcision, that is a cutting away. I believe that it is very important that we enter into this relationship by faith. I believe that if we understand what it means, much more can happen than actually happens to many Christians. I believe that you receive to the depth of your faith. Therefore, it is extremely important that our faith rise and accept these facts. It is not just a ritual, it is a spiritual circumcision of the putting away of the flesh. It is 'presenting our bodies unto God a living sacrifice', and our faith is very important. It is not simply going into the water, it is being buried with Christ. It is not simply having the pastor lift you out of the water – after you've drank a little of it because you forgot to hold your breath – it means being raised by the power of God to live a

newness of life.

Now I did not understand those things when I was baptized – that's why it's taken me so long – but you can understand them. The only thing I can remember is that I was scared. What's more, I was being baptized with 'Mr New Jersey', or number two 'Mr New Jersey', a huge weight lifter, and I felt like a little 'nothing' alongside of him. That's all I can remember, this weight lifter going into the water and me. It has taken me a few years to realise the significance of this wonderful sacrament, water baptism. Hallelujah!

It means that you relinquish your rights to yourself, you deny yourself and you begin to walk with Jesus. It means that you reject the wages of sin and you accept, by faith, the gift of God. It means that you accept the responsibilities that this relationship with Christ entails: fellowship with His people, responsibility to His Church, to support His Church with your tithes and your offerings and your attendance. There are no drones in this body. Everyone must be an active member, working together for the benefit of the whole. As a member of the family of God, you share the sufferings that come because of your stand for Jesus Christ. You take part of the afflictions and sufferings that are part of the Christian life. Maybe you never heard that preached when you were baptized before, but that's what it means. That means you take upon yourself the future glory that shall be revealed as you take upon yourself the present change that you may suffer. It is a vow of obedience to the commands of the Lord Jesus as He guides you daily and directs your life by the Holy Spirit. It also means that you come under the authority of His Church, and to the delegated authority that He places within His Church.

When Peter preached that historic sermon on the day of Pentecost, three thousand were added to the Church. I do not believe in membership. I believe that the moment a person is baptized in water, he is automatically a member of that church, or from that church he is transferred to another. He is a member of the Body of Christ the moment he believes and is baptized by the Spirit into the Body of Christ at his conversion. However, he becomes a member of the local church as he is baptized in water. What is more, he has the responsibilities that that membership entails, including obedience. As the Bible says:-

*"Obey them that have the rule over you...
for they watch for your souls."*

HEBREWS 13:17

A true pastor, or counsellor, is watching for your soul. Don't make it hard for him – he's got it hard enough – help him watch for your soul. If you overcome and are faithful to the end, you will enter into the joy of your Lord. If you are unfaithful or unfruitful, you'll be cut off like a dead branch, and finally gathered and cast into the fire, where there's weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth.

God accepts you as you accept Him. He undertakes to disciple and to discipline, and train, and strengthen and help you, every day of your life. But He says, *"be not as the mule, or the horse, that must be held in by bit and bridle."* (PSALM 32:9) Be obedient to the leadings of the Holy Ghost. Hallelujah!

*"He that is not with Me is against Me,
and he that gathereth not with Me scattereth abroad."*

MATTHEW 12:30

A soldier that gives his loyalties, or his friendship, to the enemy is considered a traitor, and he is dealt with accordingly. He is usually given the death sentence, which awaits him for his traitorous act of cowardice. I want you to turn with me to Hebrews 6:4. I do not like to talk about this Scripture, I do not like to read this Scripture, but I have to be faithful to God, and to each one of you, and this is what it says:-

HEBREWS 6:4-9

- ⁴ *For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*
⁵ *And have tasted the good Word of God, and the powers of the world to come,*
⁶ *If they shall fall away, to renew them again unto repentance; seeing they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put Him to an open shame.*
⁷ *For the earth, which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God:*
⁸ *But that which beareth thorns and briers is rejected, and is nigh unto cursing, whose end is to be burned.*
⁹ *But, beloved, we are persuaded better things of you, and things that accompany salvation, though we thus speak.*

This is a warning from God not to trample underfoot the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ that was shed to

deliver you from your sin. It is a dangerous thing to turn your back on God after you are enlightened. After you have tasted of the heavenly gift, which is the salvation of your soul. After you have received the Baptism of the Holy Ghost. After you have tasted the word of God and felt the powers of the world to come. Moreover, if you harden your heart there is no more repentance for you, only a fearful looking forward to of judgment and wrath.

"It is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

HEBREWS 10:31

It is a wonderful thing to be in the arms of Jesus, but it is a fearful thing to fall into the hands of a living God. It is terrible to be demon possessed, but you can be freed, God can break your chains. However, if you fall into the hands of a living God, and judgment comes upon you, there is nothing, no power in heaven or earth that can set you free. There is only One who can free us from the wrath of God, and that's Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, He that became flesh, the Word that became flesh to free us from the wrath of God. There is only One that can break the power of Satan and free a demon possessed person, and that's Jesus Christ. He is the Saviour of the world.

Last Sunday a man was here who told me that the only salvation for this world is the UFO's. He said they are coming very soon and they are going to save us from destruction. I said I have one Saviour, don't need any more. Jesus is my Saviour! Jesus is my Saviour from the wrath of God. I believe the UFO's are from the Devil; they are not going to save anybody. Jesus is the only Saviour: from sin, from judgment, from the power of the Devil, from the Law. Jesus is Saviour and He must be Lord, Hallelujah! If He is not Lord then He cannot be Saviour. Make Him Lord will you, please, tonight. Say, "*Lord Jesus, be Lord of my life. Be the Saviour of my soul,*" and He will set you free. Yield yourself unto Him.

ROMANS 12:1-2

- ¹ *I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service...*
² *...And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*

You might not think it reasonable, but God said it was reasonable, I think it is reasonable, Hallelujah!

Present your body, present your spirit, present your soul unto God and in this wonderful water baptism that we're going to have, you'll have an opportunity to not only do that in the spirit, but to do that in the flesh. To be buried with Christ. Remember what it means: it is not simply going under the water; it is being buried with Christ. It is not simply coming out of the water; it is being raised together. And He will keep you; you cannot keep yourself five minutes. You cannot save yourself. You cannot keep yourself. Jesus can keep you, if by faith you trust Him, and you lean upon Him everyday. Remember that in your weakness, you will find strength. That when you feel that you cannot do it, God's strength comes flowing into your heart. You will be able to overcome by faith.

This is one step, there will be many more, but you cannot take the others until you take the first.

Repent, and be baptized, every one of you... for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

ACTS 2:38

That is God's promise. God's conditions. Will you accept them? Let us pray.

Father, we thank you, for Your wonderful provision for sin. The sacrifice of Jesus Christ, our Saviour, that cancelled all our debts and sets us free from the power of darkness. I thank you, Lord, for this water baptism and what it means. Coming through the Red Sea and being freed from the Pharaoh of our souls. And we know that same sea that saved the Israelites drowned the armies of the Egyptians. And we know that water baptism breaks the power of cancelled sin, and breaks the power of Satan over our lives. We are looking forward to it, Lord, to that experience of entering into the water with Thee into Your death. As You went into the tomb, we enter into the water. You came out of the tomb alive forever more, so we are raised, raised up to walk with Thee, in newness of life. O God, give us the faith that this circumcision may take place. That You will break the power of the flesh over us that we might be able to walk in holiness. For without holiness, no man shall see the Lord. Hallelujah! Praise the Lord.