

TODAY'S ORDER OF WORSHIP

Welcome by: Don Taylor /Opening Prayer by: Ken Coleman

Morning Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#587 Sing and Be Happy
#742 When Upon Life's Billows

Scripture Reading by: Matthew Girard

#324 Alas! And Did My Savior Bleed?

Lord's Supper and Contribution

#615 He Keeps Me Singing

Sermon: "Worship for Right Living"

Isaiah 1:11, 16-17

#332 Lead Me to Calvary
#560 Living by Faith

Closing Prayer by: Andre Jones

Welcome by: Don Taylor

Evening Assembly Song Leader: Michael Simmons

#701 My Jesus I Love Thee
#414 Anywhere with Jesus

Scripture Reading: Tristan Strickhausen

Prayer by: David Smith

#443 Love Lifted Me

Sermon: "One Word: Sin"

1 John 1:8-10

#417 Where He Leads I'll Follow
#464 Rock of Ages

Closing Prayer by: Bobby Rader

Other Opportunities For Spiritual Growth

Sunday: 9:00am — Bible Study Classes, 10:00am — Worship, 6:00pm — Worship

Wednesday: 10:00am — Ladies Bible Class, 7:00pm — Bible Study Classes

January 20, 2019

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

Galatians 5:1

What Must I Know?

Baptism is a tremendously significant event. In baptism, God promises to extend his grace to the penitent believer, and we appropriate all the blessings associated with the saving work of Jesus Christ. We have had 3 baptisms in recent weeks. We rejoice that these young people made the commitment to follow Jesus, had their sins washed away, and were added to his church.

Now, baptism is more than just experiencing any sort of rite involving water. For one thing, the word itself means "immersion." We see an indication of the significance of the method **Romans 6:1-14:** *We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life (v. 4).* Immersion perfectly symbolizes that burial and resurrection that is reenacted in our baptism.

For another, baptism is always presented in the NT as a response made by those who believe in Jesus. Read through the conversion accounts in the book of Acts, for example, and you will find that baptism results from the preaching of the good news and the decision of hearers to accept it. As **Acts 2:41** sums up, *those who received his word were baptized.*

Considering its significance, the question is: how do we make sure someone is ready to be baptized? That's a very practical question. You may have a child or grandchild considering it and want to make sure they're ready. You may be studying with a friend and want to be sure what you tell him is right. You may even be reading this and thinking about baptism yourself but aren't sure you're ready.

This is vitally important because sometimes people question the validity of their own baptism later in life, wondering if they knew enough. And sometimes, I worry that we have placed requirements on candidates for baptism that go beyond Scripture. We said already that baptism is in response to the good news that is preached. Maybe the clearest example comes from **Acts 2**, where 3,000 were baptized after a single sermon. That must have included the necessary prerequisites for baptism. What are they?

1. You must believe in Jesus. Most of Peter's sermon is about him: he performed great signs and wonders; those in the crowd put him on the cross, but God raised him from the dead and exalted him to his right hand; he poured out the Holy Spirit. This led to the inescapable conclusion *that God has made him both Lord and Christ, this Jesus whom you crucified (Acts 2:36).* Peter's message is that Jesus is Lord; that is the fundamental thing people must know and believe before baptism.

Our Sick

Tim Watts, Lois Watts' grandson, has been diagnosed with Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma.

Upcoming Activities

Elders, Minister meeting Wednesday at 6:00pm.

We will have a Houston Food Bank truck on Thursday, Jan. 24th at 8:00 am.

We are in the process of starting a new church recipe book. Please be thinking of recipes you would like to share. More details to come.

We are working through the book "One Word" together This is a daily devotional book, and our Sunday evening lessons will relate to it. If you are interested in participating in this program, please pick up a book from the office. One free book per household; additional books may be purchased for \$5/each.

<u>Elders</u>	<u>Deacons</u>	<u>Minister</u>
Ken Coleman	Daniel Balch	Bryant Perkins
Bob Parker	Danny Balch	
Bobby Rader	Shannon Smith	
Don Taylor	Phillip Strickhausen	
Robert Ward		

Communion Preparation: Marsha LaFour
 Nursery Attendants: Tania Balch, Pat Hobbs

Communion Preparation for Sunday, Jan. 27th: Susan McCain
 Nursery Attendants for Sunday, Jan. 27th: Jane Tinkle, Rita Upton

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2. You must be ready to commit. Peter's audience was convinced – *they were cut to the heart* - and so they cried out, *Brothers, what shall we do?* (**Acts 2:37**) Peter's first word was for them to *Repent*. Repentance involves sorrow over sin, it results in a reformation of life, but in between is its heart: to change the mind, the heart, the will, and turn to God, committing to follow him. Crucially, this does NOT mean they had to stop sinning and begin living perfect lives before baptism. If we had to wait for that, no one would ever be baptized! Rather, it is a commitment to turn to God and begin living by his ways as best we can. We must count the cost of discipleship before baptism, realizing how serious a commitment it is (cf. **Luke 14:25-33**).

3. You must understand what baptism means. After telling them to repent, Peter told them to be baptized, specifically *in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit*. The crowd understood that their baptism would be in the name of Jesus – that is, by his authority, with a view to him – so they would become his followers and be united with him, his teachings, and his blessings. Similarly, Paul was told his baptism was calling on the name of the Lord (**Acts 22:16**). He writes at different points that baptism is *into Christ* (**Galatians 3:27; Romans 6:3**). People knew before baptism took place that was a means of uniting with Jesus.

But that does not mean you must understand every blessing associated with baptism for it to be valid. We all learn more as we progress in our Christian walk. Peter said nothing about how baptism adds you to the church, but it does that (**Acts 2:41**). He did not mention that it makes us children of God in a special way, but it does that (**Galatians 3:26-27**). Here, we must note that the forgiveness of sins is one blessing associated with baptism – but it is not the only one. Scripture does not attach ultimate significance to it compared to the other blessings of baptism; in fact, it is not even the only one mentioned in **Acts 2:38!** Forgiveness is a promise, not a command; you cannot obey a promise. The command is to be baptized in the name of Jesus; the promise is that God will grant forgiveness of sins to those who do.

In the words of James Harding, when evaluating whether someone had been baptized properly, he would simply ask them "Did you believe with your whole heart that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God, and did you confess him as Lord?" That sums up well these 3 things we must know before baptism. If you have those set, you are ready to give your life to Christ. If you knew those things when you were immersed, your baptism is in accordance with Scripture. But remember: baptism is the beginning, not the end. A relationship with Jesus Christ is a lifelong journey. We must continue to grow from there.

Bryant Perkins

"Stand Firm in...Liberty"

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Continued Prayers

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Gwen Pettit, Gary Nielsen, Harold Cryer, Steve Ward, Jackie David, Frank & Tina Garcia, Bill Lunceford, Eric Davis, J. P. Williams, Mark Wilcox, Dayla Hale, Phillip Cottle, Joe Edd Stifflemire, Kevin Coleman

Shut Ins

(Need cards, phone calls & visits)

Jim Smith, Pauline Taylor, Winona Angelle, Myrtle Sheffield, Ronnie Rubit, Joe Leonard, Dr. Ronald Davis, Larry Hicks

Our Missionaries

Aaron & Marisa Bailey in Mwanza, Africa, Rod Kyle in the South Pacific

Plastic Bags

The Food Bank is in need of plastic grocery bags. A barrel is in the foyer.