

Baptism Celebration – Rom 6:1-4 (10/10/10)

Welcome; Visitors; This is a different service for us, a baptism celebration, where a total of 38 people are getting baptized this weekend – 9 students and 29 adults
But before we get there, I want to be clear about what baptism is; Rom 6:1-4 (**Intro**)

Having just said in v20 – *where sin increased, grace abounded all the more . . .*
He says in 6:1 – *What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound? By no means! How can we who died to sin still live in it?*
How can we who have been released from the bondage of sin – including its overwhelming power and unavoidable consequences, continue in it?
We can't – not b/c we're unable, but b/c it's unthinkable

And to support that thought, he cites some of the foundational truths of our salvation, using *baptism* to illustrate them
3 – *Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?*
Do you not know that those who have been saved – who have been brought under the influence of Christ just like we're brought under the water . . .
Do you not know that those who have been saved, have also been brought under the influence of his sin-defeating death on the cross?
Forever the recipients of his grace and forgiveness and freedom? It's true Paul says
4 – *We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death . . .*
That is, when we were saved, we died *to* sin b/c he died *for* sin . . .
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.
We too might be raised from our deadness, our *spiritual* deadness
So that we would live the life he gives

Paul uses baptism to describe some of the most foundational truths of our faith; And in doing so, he implies that . . .
It's a picture of salvation
Without ever saying a word, each baptism that you'll witness, is a picture of their death *to* sin, and Christ's death *for* their sin
And a picture of their new life *in* Christ, b/c of Christ's life in them
Baptism is a picture of salvation, and the resulting newness of life we experience

It doesn't *save* you, nor does it somehow *contribute* to your salvation
Rather, it shows that you *have* been saved; Otherwise it would be a work
And **2 Tim 1:9** says – [God] *saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works* [not b/c of something we did] *but because of his own purpose and grace*

It's God's work of *grace* in your life that saves you, not your works of obedience *****
We obey *b/c* we're saved, not to *get* saved – salvation is a gift
And baptism is a picture of it

So by being baptized, each and every person is picturing outwardly, what has *already* taken place inwardly
That they've been forgiven of their sin and released fr its bondage thru repentance . . .
And assured of eternal life through faith; It's a picture of salvation

It's an expression of belief

Baptism is one of the main ways in the Bible, for us to say publicly, that we believe personally
That we believe in Jesus; That we believe his Word; That we trust him by faith

Over and over again you find statements in the Bible like (**Acts 8:12**) . . .
When they believed . . . they were baptized
And (**Acts 2:41**) *those who received his word were baptized*

The question is, why? Why were they baptized? *****
To express their belief; To *show* their faith in Jesus

So by the very act of being baptized, each/every person is expressing their belief that Jesus has forgiven their sins and secured their future

It's a declaration of identity

Baptism is a declaration of identity that they are a child of God
Having been united with him through Christ, each and every person is saying – “I'm his, and he's mine; I'm in him and he's in me; I'm his child”

Something they can be sure of b/c of Scriptures like **John 1:12** which says . . .
To all who did receive him [as opposed to those who didn't], *who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God*
And baptism is a declaration of that identity – that they are a child of God, adopted into his family *****

It's a proclamation of allegiance

Each and every person is proclaiming that Jesus is Lord of their lives
2 Cor 5:15 says – *He died for all, that those who live might no longer live for themselves but for him who for their sake died and was raised.*
Jesus died so you and I would no longer live for ourselves, but for him – that he would be Lord of our lives
And baptism, as an act of solidarity *with* him and obedience *to* him – is a proclamation of that allegiance *****
That “Jesus is Lord of my life, and I'm not ashamed to proclaim it”

That's what each and every person is saying by being baptized
It's not a church thing or a Harvest thing – it's a God thing (**Summary**)

So get ready to rejoice at his work of grace in each person's life
And if you find yourself thinking – “I don't have that; I don't know God like that” . . .
Then listen carefully to their testim's; And if God presses on your heart, call out to him
Confessing your sin, believing in Jesus to save you (In Tank), and receiving him into your life to live for him as Lord – just like they have (Doug; John W; Jeremy)