

Baptism Celebration – 3/6/16

Welcome to our Baptism Celebration; A total of 25 people are getting baptized this weekend, and it's always a joy

But before we get to the baptisms, I want to take few minutes to tell you what baptism *is*, and what it *does*; Starting with this . . .

1. Baptism expresses our faith in Christ

That's what we saw recently in 1 Pet 3:21, where it says that baptism corresponds to Noah's ark

It goes like this – just like the ark was Noah's tangible and visible expression of *his* faith in God, baptism is the tangible and visible expression of *ours*

Building and getting into the ark was Noah's outward expression of his faith in God

While getting baptized is *our* outward expression of faith in God

2. Baptism pictures our escape from judgment

Again from 1 Pet 3, just like the ark was *Noah's* means of escape from the judgment of the *flood* – baptism pictures *our* escape from the judgment of death

Or to say it another way, the waters of *baptism* represent judgment and *death*, just like the waters of the flood did

And baptism itself, represents our *escape* from such judgment, by coming up *out* of the water, and passing through

3. Baptism reflects our obedience to Christ

Just like any other act of obedience in the Bible, baptism is a part of working out our *salvation with fear and trembling* (Ph 2:12); Something we're *told* to do

Like the Apostle Peter said in Acts 2:38 – *repent and be baptized every one of you*

It's an act of obedience

But it's important to understand that it doesn't save you; If it did, or in some way contributed to it – that would be a work

And 2 Timothy 1:9 says that – [God] *saved us and called us to a holy calling, not because of our works but because of his own purpose and grace*

God saved us and called us based on his own unmerited favor; Not our works of obedience; We obey *b/c* we're saved, not to *get* saved

And baptism reflects that

4. Baptism encourages others in Christ

The *church*; And especially those who have *already* been baptized

Reminding us of *our* walk with Christ, and *our* salvation, and *our* commitment to him

Even refueling us to keep on and *persevere* in our walk

5. Baptism challenges those apart from Christ

It challenges those who *don't* believe in Jesus; Who *don't* follow him as Lord

Urging them to repent and be saved

If that's you – I trust you'll listen closely; And maybe even make this the day of *your* salvation

In fact, I'm going to give you an opportunity to do so at the end of the service

To admit that you're a sinner; Express your belief in Jesus; Repent of your sin; And receive him into your life

6. Baptism glorifies God

And that's the ultimate point – to glorify the one who saved us in the first place, and keeps us for all eternity; It's not about them, it's about him (**Summary**)

I hope that increases your anticipation for all this, and that your heart overflows as you rejoice with those involved

Pray (get in tank) – Lord, bless each and every person getting baptized; For their courage, their boldness, and their obedience; Impress on us the miracle and meaning of it all; And be glorified