

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