

HC 69-70 – Baptism: You need it and you should want it!

Brothers and sisters in Jesus Christ: Last week you saw that the 2 sacraments God gave us, baptism and the Lord's Supper, were **sensible signs**, signs that **focused our eyes on the work of Jesus on the cross**, just like circumcision and the Passover, the precursors to baptism and the Lord's Supper do.

Anything that does not focus our eyes on the cross cannot be considered a sacrament.

Today you will see the **details of the 1st sensible sign, baptism**, and how it focuses us on the work of Christ on the cross.

Our headings are:

The Meaning of Baptism Taught

The Meaning of Baptism Illustrated

Our goals are: That **you will love God who sent his Son and Holy Spirit to give to you the benefits of eternal life and to mark those benefits by sprinkling you with water.**

The Meaning of Baptism Taught

69 Q. HOW DOES BAPTISM **REMINDE YOU AND ASSURE YOU** THAT CHRIST'S ONE SACRIFICE ON THE CROSS IS FOR YOU **PERSONALLY?**

A. In this way: **Christ instituted this outward washing** and with it **gave the promise** that, as surely as water washes away the dirt from the body, so **certainly his blood and his Spirit wash away my soul's impurity**, in other words, all my sins.

1. As a believer you are commanded by the Lord to submit to water baptism.

Jesus instituted this (Matthew 28) and his disciples reiterated this command.

Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "Repent, and **let every one of you be baptized** in the name of Jesus Christ, for the remission of sins...

Those who refuse to submit themselves are in **rebellion against the Lord's command** or are **showing a dismissive attitude to what Christ did on the cross.**

By being baptized and watching others being baptized, you are showing you need the great sacrifice of Christ.

2. Baptism reminds and assures you that as surely as water washes away dirt from your body, so Christ's blood washes away all your sins.

So baptism is a sign. You can illustrate this from a wedding ring which is a **beautiful sign.**

3. Baptism reminds you and assures you that you have a beautiful eternal seal on your soul and are declared a legitimate son of God.

God reminds you and assures you that Christ has fully paid for all your sins, and you belong to him 100%, forever. You can illustrate this with a certificate that has a **beautiful seal** impressed on it. The seal reassures you of its authenticity.

4. Baptism reminds you and assures you that you are united with Christ.

You were united in Christ when he died, when he was buried, and when he rose again from the dead.

Romans 6: 3 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were **baptized into His death?** 4 Therefore we were buried with Him through baptism into death, that just as Christ was raised 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 **united together** in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 knowing this, that our old man was crucified with Him, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin. **7 For he who has died has been freed from sin.** 8 Now if we died with Christ, we believe that **we shall also live with Him,** **11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin,** but **alive to God in Christ** Jesus our Lord.

Those who are baptized are inexorably united in Christ. This **was not intended to teach the mode/method of baptism.**

Apostle Paul simply wanted to teach Christians they were united with Christ and therefore should not live however they want. Remember, a wedding band is a reminder of your duty. This is why you make breakfast for your husband.

If someone argues being buried with Christ was a symbol of the mode of baptism (immersion), then ask them how come baptism is “put on” in Galatians 3, and poured on by the Holy Spirit in Acts 2.

(Gal 3:27 “For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have **put on Christ.**” Acts 2: 17 ‘And it shall come to pass in the last days, says God, That I will **pour out** of My Spirit on all flesh...’)

But none of these 3 passages was intended to teach the mode of baptism.

The truth is, being “put under” water usually symbolized destruction in the Bible. Pharaoh and his army were put under water, not Israel. The people of the flood were put under water, but not Noah.

And the Bible teaches that Noah’s baptism (the one rained on, not immersed) symbolized our baptism. (1Pet 3:20)

5. Baptism reminds you and assures you that you are united with the covenant community-God’s people.

You pledge to God to support and correct each other, and work together to advance Christ’s kingdom.

What rich blessings are in the church of Jesus Christ!

6. Let’s get personal: Does Christ see you living like you are related to him? Do the people around see you are united with Christ? Do people see you joined to the family of Christ?

Fleshing that out more, since you are in Christ, **do you help your fellow brothers and sisters? Do you praise God for his church? Do you praise God you are in his kingdom? Are you serving in your kingdom role** of reaching the lost?

This is what God expects from someone he baptizes...from someone who knows Jesus’ blood was shed for their sins!

The Meaning of Baptism Illustrated

70 Q. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO BE **WASHED WITH CHRIST’S BLOOD AND SPIRIT?**

A. To be washed with Christ’s blood means that God, by grace, **has forgiven my sins** because of Christ’s blood poured out for me in his sacrifice on the cross. To be washed with Christ’s Spirit means that the **Holy Spirit has renewed** me and set me apart to be a member of Christ so that more and more I become dead to sin and increasingly live a holy and blameless life.

1. Now we come to this unique illustration of baptism: “We are washed in Christ’s blood and Spirit.”

How can we be washed in blood and Spirit?

2. Being “washed in Christ’s blood” does not mean you were immersed in the blood of Christ physically.

That would be gross. **Look from where that language of being washed comes.**

Exodus 29:21 "... take some of the blood that is on the altar, and some of the anointing oil, and **sprinkle it on Aaron** and on his garments, on his sons and on the garments of his sons with him; **and he and his garments shall be hallowed**, and his sons and his sons' garments with him.

When the priests were sprinkled (baptized) with blood they were declared to be washed of their sins. Blood was sprinkled over them and they were fit to be priests.

Sprinkling symbolized washing! Then they were viewed as holy.

Today, blood is not literally sprinkled over you because you have no need for blood anymore. Christ's blood was shed.

So God instituted that you are sprinkled with water now.

3. To be washed (sprinkling/baptized) with Christ's blood means God has forgiven you all your sins, and like Aaron's sons, you are now fit to be priests before God – of that royal priesthood.

God did not use a literal washing with blood to symbolize spiritual washing. Sprinkling symbolized washing.

4. The language of being washed (and show you are forgiven) by the poured-out blood of Jesus is found throughout the Bible.

a. Zechariah, a prophet of God, spoke of the future work of God and the sacrificing of Jesus Christ.

Zechariah 13: 1 "In that day **a fountain shall be opened** for the house of David and for the inhabitants of Jerusalem, **for sin and for uncleanness.**

Zechariah pointed to the spiritual cleansing work of Jesus Christ that is symbolized in baptism.

b. Ezekiel stated that Christ would sprinkle his church and make her clean.

Ezekiel 36:25 "Then I **will sprinkle clean water on you**, and you shall be clean; **I will cleanse you from all your filthiness and from all your idols.** 26 "I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit within you; I will take the heart of stone out of your flesh and give you a heart of flesh.

c. The writer of Hebrews testified Jesus washed you with his blood because animals' blood wasn't good enough to clean you!

Hebrews 12:24 to Jesus the Mediator of the new covenant, and to the **blood of sprinkling** that speaks better things than that of Abel.

Hebrews 9:14 how much more shall the **blood of Christ**, who through the eternal Spirit offered Himself without spot to God, **cleanse your conscience** from dead works to serve the living God?

Consciences can't be washed by Christ's blood literally, but consciences can be washed spiritually by Christ's blood. As a result, you are forgiven. Your conscience is figuratively scrubbed clean. (This is why you need a non-literal sign.)

d. Apostle John wrote of this is a most direct way:

Revelation 1: 5...To Him who loved us and **washed us** from our sins in His own blood,

5. Let us make some final conclusions about the mode of baptism before we conclude.

Aaron and his sons were sprinkled (baptized) to declare them clean, it was called "a washing," but it was not a literal washing in blood.

When you are sprinkled (baptized) to declare you clean, it is called a washing, but it is not a literal washing in blood. No one can literally wash the conscience.

So baptism by immersion is inconsistent with the nature of the sacraments. Baptism by sprinkling or pouring were the provable methods of the Old Testament—something New Testament believers continued.

Further, there is no provable case of immersion in the Bible. Immersion is a possible translation of "baptism" but it only became common in modern usage. Because Jesus came "out of the water" when he was baptized is not proof he was immersed. (The Jordan can be ankle deep.) If there were many people to baptize, it made sense to stand in the river to be sprinkled.

Those who argue baptism must be by immersion, rejecting all others, would have to prove baptism by sprinkling and pouring, as was provably done before, was abolished by God.

But keep in mind that the amount of water used in your baptism does not make it more or less effective. So if you were immersed in the Triune God, it is still considered baptism. It is one who works in you and indeed washes away your sins that makes the true difference.

If God were going to make a big change to the mode of the covenant sign, he surely would have said so (like he did for a change from blood to water), but he didn't!

6. This work of washing you with Christ's blood is done by the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit then renews you to be more and more like Jesus Christ, removing all your sins.

John 3:5 Jesus answered, "Most assuredly, I say to you, **unless one is born of water and the Spirit,** he cannot enter the kingdom of God.

Your soul becomes cleaner every day. He will continue to work in you till you die. You need it.

7. Let's get personal again: Because you are washed in the blood of the Lamb you will testify to others of the work of the one who baptized you and forgave you your sins – not the preacher – God!

Do people see you as clean? Do you tell others why you are clean?

You will remember how the Israelites had the blood of the Passover lamb on the doorposts and lintel of their front doors, not just as evidence their sins were forgiven, but also as a public testimony—a testimony to the Egyptians. **As a result of this, many of Egyptians left with the Jews.** They knew beyond doubt the Jews were the people of God by the Passover blood. (Covenant sign)

Your life and your lips are like the door posts on which the blood of Christ is painted! Do they show that Christ is living in your house?

Conclusion:

At your baptism God put a **sign on your head** and confirmed a **seal in your heart** that you belong to Jesus. You belong to Jesus because **he paid for your freedom with his blood** – his **red blood** that **washed your black sins** and **made you as white as snow.**

Brothers and Sisters in Jesus Christ:

1. Love what Jesus Christ did for you. He shed his blood for you. Don't get tired hearing of his love. How can you get tired hearing of one who loved you even when you hated him and never gave up coming after you?

2. Listen to his warm assurances he gives you through baptism.

3. Live like your sins are forgiven.

4. Lift him high for the world to see....see him on the cross, suffering for their sins...so they can be saved.

Finally, if you are not a Christian, you are still in your sins and will die in your sins. You can escape death if you believe Jesus died on the cross for your sins. You will show you believe by being baptized and being incorporated into the body of Christ – the church – and receive all his benefits.