

Week Two: From John to Pentecost

The Old Testament is full of glorious promises. God's chosen people would be redeemed from their bondage to sin by a Mediator, the Son of David; the benefits of the blessings of the covenant would not be outward, but applied by the Holy Spirit, who would be poured out.

Then there is silence for over 400 years.

Since a sacrament is a sign and seal of promise, what promise is baptism a sign and seal of?

Just as Israel was delivered from the bondage of Egypt by the power of God and formed into a new nation through the Red Sea, so also God's chosen people are redeemed from their sins by the blood of Christ which is applied to the hearts of men by the Holy Spirit, who regenerates them and joins them to the new nation of God – the Kingdom of God.”

1. John's baptism: God remembers His covenant

“John's baptism...was an indictment against and a condemnation of the Jews...but – let us not forget this – also something more. It was incontrovertible proof that God remembered his covenant and fulfilled his promise. Despite the fact that the Jews were culpable and impure, there was forgiveness with God and this forgiveness was going to be even more richly manifest than in the days of the Old Testament.” (Bavinck)

Mark 1:1-8

- John testified that baptism was a sign of the “baptism of the Holy Spirit”, which was the coming fulfillment of the promises of the Old Testament.
- Therefore he called men to repentance, to prepare the way of the Lord.

John 1:19-34

- John testifies that the Holy Spirit descended upon Jesus at His baptism
- Therefore, He is the one who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.
- The essential thing of baptism is the sign of purification. Buried and raised with Christ (Rom. 6:1-4) are implications of baptism, but it is much more.
- The baptism of John was a sign that God was fulfilling his promise through Jesus, pouring out His Holy Spirit who would clean and purify his people (Matt. 3:11-12)

2. The Great Commission

Matt. 28:18-20 ¹⁸ **And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth.**

(Jesus, the mediator of the New Covenant, has been given ALL authority in heaven and earth. He will not relinquish it. Therefore everything is governed by Him for the good of His church, making effectual the command that follows)

¹⁹ **Go ye therefore, and teach all nations,** (Make disciples – bring them under the authority of the King of Kings. A disciple is one who has learned and practices the truth –see 2 Tim.3:15-17)

baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: (or, baptize into...It means more than merely on the authority of...It means that our only hope of salvation is when the Triune God pulls us from the miry pit, redeems us from sin and all the power of the devil, and applies this benefit to his people. God the Father's love sent his Son to take away our sins. The Holy Spirit is sent to work regeneration, faith, hope, love... etc.

- NAME is singular. "Name" in the bible indicates the attributes or essence of a being. There is only One God, and Only One Redeemer.
- The construct of the grammar indicates One Name, but three persons. They are not three entities who share a family name, if this was being taught, the grammar would be different. It is also not three different names (beings) sharing a common name, for that also would have a different construction
- There are three persons, and One Name – one being, one essence, One God

Our salvation is the work of the Triune God; our Baptism is in His Name. Loved by God, Redeemed by the Son, engrafted into Christ by the Holy Spirit.

Baptism then signifies the purification of the blood of Christ and the Holy Spirit, whereby we are placed in a communion of fellowship with the Triune God, being engrafted into Christ.

²⁰ Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you:

- This goes together with Baptism, both of which are the means of making disciples of the world.
- A disciple is taught, continually and always to bring his life into conformity with Christ
- Therefore, there is no magical property to water baptism, it is a sign and seal of the promise of God
- This promise must be taught, believed, and acted on.
- We spend our whole lives learning what it means to be cleansed by the blood of Christ
- Through this promise we eventually learn to put off the fig leaves of our own making, and rest more and more in the promises of God.

and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen.

- The words are that Christ will be with us, in fellowship, in our company
- He has been given all power and the right to exercise it. Therefore he will save each one of his sheep, for there is nothing outside of his control
- He will be with us every day, day by day, until the consummation of all things
- This is a promise that we are truly cleansed, in close fellowship with Christ, and by implication, one another
- We are led, gathered, and preserved by our King, who united himself to us by his Holy Spirit, until we are in His presence at the consummation of all things together (Eph. 1:10).

Tit. 3:1 ⁵ Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost; ⁶ Which he shed on us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Saviour; ⁷ That being justified by his grace, we should be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life.

1 Pet. 1:2 Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ: Grace unto you, and peace, be multiplied.

3. This was the "the promise of the Father". It was a promise that God would deliver his people from their sins by forgiving them, writing the law on their hearts, circumcising the foreskin of their hearts. It was a promise that God would purify the sons of Levi, and refine them as silver is refined.

Luke 24:44-53, Acts 1:4-8

- In other words, the promise of the Father was the outpouring of the Holy Spirit

4. The sermon at Pentecost

Acts 2 This is the next topic.