

Chapter 5 leaves us with this verse: **Romans 5:21** (NKJV) so that as sin reigned in death, even so grace might reign through righteousness to eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

Romans 6:1-10 (NKJV) 1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it? 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, 9 knowing that Christ, having been raised from the dead, dies no more. Death no longer has dominion over Him. 10 For [the death] that He died, He died to sin once for all; but [the life] that He lives, He lives to God.

Now that we have been born again, we have been set free from the line of Adam where sin reigns and the end is death. We are now saved by the righteousness of Jesus Christ through faith where grace reigns through righteousness leading to eternal life in Jesus Christ.

- *The Kingdom of God, the rule and reign of King Jesus is marked by righteousness. Therefore we don't continue to sin so that His grace may abound.* His grace empowers us to live in His righteousness,

We are dead to sin and if we are dead, how can we live in it any longer? Paul explains that this is what the sacrament of baptism is all about.

- **Baptism is a picture of death. It's a funeral for our old man!** *We go under the water covered in the filth and destruction of sin and we come up alive, resurrected in His life covered in His righteousness.*
 - *We leave the old man (Adam) behind and arise a new creation.*
 - **Baptism is an act of faith and obedience that states "I believe in and align my life with the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ and I receive His finished work personally."**
 - **There is a line drawn in the sand. I never have to go backwards but I fully enter into this new life.**
1. I am identifying with Jesus Christ and entering into His death through baptism, arising out of the waters into His resurrection life.
 2. I am given life here and now by the power of His resurrection.

3. I am also looking forward to the day when I will have a bodily resurrection and will spend eternity in heaven! It's a prophetic act looking to the future.
 - **We are dead to our sinful nature**, we leave it behind as we are washed, we are now alive in Jesus Christ with a new nature that is able to love and serve Him. **We are new creations in and through Christ.** (2Cor. 5:17)
 - **Baptism does not save you! You are saved by grace, through faith (Eph. 2:8).** **It is however an act of obedience and faithfulness that is entirely necessary for every believer to enter into.** *If you are saved by faith you will be baptized. There is not one scriptural example of a disciple not being baptized outside the sinner on the cross.*
 - **You have moved from death to life.** *You are no longer under the law and the penalty of the law which is death/hell. In Christ you are now in His kingdom under the Lord's grace and favor.*
 - **Baptism is commanded, not suggested. Repent and be baptized was the cry of the Apostles to those who wanted to enter this new life in Christ.**

Acts 2:37-38 (NKJV) 37 Now when they heard [this,] they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men [and] brethren, what shall we do?" 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; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Baptism not only has benefit in obedience, it unlocks something in the invisible realm for us. That unlocking not only takes place when you are baptized but is a fresh resource that may be re-appropriated throughout your life.

Jesus opened a doorway for a dynamic to be released at baptism. Water baptism is not intended to be a mere ritual, it is a sacred event, ordained by heaven and filled with the presence of Jesus.

- **The Lord is calling us to a pathway of obedience as disciples.** There are things He wants to unfold and release to you. *Water baptism opens the way to things that will never happen in your life until you take that pathway to obedience.*

Mark 1:10 (NKJV) And immediately, coming up from the water, He saw the heavens parting and the Spirit descending upon Him like a dove.

- The parting of the heavens that it mentions at Jesus baptism has to do with not an opening of a space in the sky but with a **rending, a ripping open (veil torn in two) of the invisible realm for something to break through.** **The disciple of Jesus Christ is given an availability to things that are supernatural.** We realize as we enter into this sacred obedience and publicly make the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, we are enabled

to-touch the things of heaven. Through Christ Jesus the heavens have been ripped open.

- **Just as the Holy Spirit came upon Jesus and rested upon His life, the Father wants to do the same for us. The Spirit comes and rests upon us for the purpose of ministry and mission.** Every one of us have a ministry to live out—It takes the power of the Holy Spirit for that to occur. The Lord wants to open up that resource to us at special dimensions that are illustrated at what happened to Him at baptism. Jesus ministry took place following His own baptism.

Baptism Like communion is a Sacrament. Baptism does something real spiritually. Early Christians didn't treat baptism as optional or merely symbolic. It was seen as: A washing from sin, A new birth (John 3:5), Incorporation into the body of Christ. **If you were raised with the understanding that this is in outward sign of an inward grace you have a very incomplete understanding. Not a symbol a sacrament.**

- **Sacraments are sacred events in which we can experience the deep fellowship of the Holy Spirit through our participating in what is made available through Jesus Christ.** We understand that these activities of divine grace must be filled with faith and not done out if vain repetition. *These acts of loving obedience can open up our hearts and minds to a deep place of enjoying the Lord in all His fullness.*

I want to challenge you to enlarge your willingness to believe in the power and infusion of God in the sacraments and not to Limit Him based upon your pre-built religious structures. Across 2,000 years, the dominant and earliest Christian view is that baptism is a real encounter with God's grace—something God does, not just something we do. The purely symbolic interpretation is a later development, mostly emerging during and after the Reformation.

I appreciate that the Orthodox Church doesn't try to pin sacraments down to a tight definition. They usually speak of "**Holy Mysteries**" rather than just "sacraments."

- A sacrament is an encounter with the uncreated grace (energies) of God.
- It becomes sacred because God actually acts through it, not just symbolically.
- The sacrament is a real participation in divine life
- Grace is truly given because Christ acts through the sacrament, God actually uses touch points from heaven that He fills with Himself so they are no longer ordinary things but holy unto the Lord. (Body, Blood, waters, oil)

- Many Protestant limit the miraculous mystery of God using physical elements like the wine and bread, waters of baptism, anointing of oil, etc. I believe many have been guilty of viewing these things as symbols or tokens of remembrance rather than sacred, infused by the Holy Spirit that are meant to enter into with expectation and faith in the miraculous provision and the real presence of Jesus Christ.

From the book of Acts, it appears that in the first generations, baptism took place immediately on acceptance of Christ. But **by the end of the second century baptism was preceded by a period of elaborate and intense preparations.**

- Baptism was a ritual for adults, not infants.
- The months, sometimes years leading up to baptism were times of discipleship and formation in the Christian's life.
- There was a long period of discipleship leading up to the commitment of becoming a disciple of Jesus Christ. in the early church baptism was not a private affair, but a communal celebration of the entire community. Everyone had a roll the bishop and clergy, neighbors, friends, and family. The gravity of the seriousness of baptism, and the sacredness of this event was emphasized through the memorization of creeds fasting, deliverance, and finally the immersion in water. All these things heightened the experience to the church. This was a highlighted event that took place on Easter.

The goal was not just intellectual agreement but formation into a new way of being. In that sense, discipleship precedes baptism, not just follows it.

Before baptism, the Church would include formal prayers of exorcism. These are not fringe practices—they are standard, ancient, and universal in historic liturgies.

The individual would face west (symbolizing darkness) and renounces Satan:

- “Do you renounce Satan, and all his works, and all his angels...?”
- Then they turn east (toward Christ) and confess allegiance to Him.
- Prior to being baptized the individual was discipled, delivered and prepared to live out their commitment to Christ.
- I am rethinking how we should disciple prior to this Holy event.
- Considered the bridal bath: baptism was metaphorically described as the bridal washing or purification ceremony that prepared believers to be united as one body with Christ.

Romans 6:11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord. 12 Therefore do not let sin reign in your mortal body, that you should obey it in its lusts. 13 And do not present your members [as] instruments of unrighteousness to

sin, but present yourselves to God as being alive from the dead, and your members [as] instruments of righteousness to God. 14 For sin shall not have dominion over you, for you are not under law but under grace. 15 What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law but under grace? Certainly not! 16 Do you not know that to whom you present yourselves slaves to obey, you are that one's slaves whom you obey, whether of sin [leading] to death, or of obedience [leading] to righteousness? 17 But God be thanked that [though] you were slaves of sin, yet you obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine to which you were delivered. 18 And having been set free from sin, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I speak in human [terms] because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members [as] slaves of uncleanness, and of lawlessness [leading] to [more] lawlessness, so now present your members [as] slaves [of] righteousness for holiness. 20 For when you were slaves of sin, you were free in regard to righteousness. 21 What fruit did you have then in the things of which you are now ashamed? For the end of those things [is] death. 22 But now having been set free from sin, and having become slaves of God, you have your fruit to holiness, and the end, everlasting life. 23 For the wages of sin [is] death, but the gift of God [is] eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Conclude with following declarations presenting ourselves to God

1. I reckon/consider myself dead to sin and I consider myself alive to God in Jesus Christ.
2. I no longer present the members of my body as instruments of unrighteous to sin. I present myself to God and thank him that though I was dead, now I'm alive in Jesus Christ.
3. The instruments of my body which used to be for sin are set apart for His righteousness. My mind, heart, mouth, feet, hands, eyes, and every other part of my body sanctified by the Holy Spirit.
4. I am no longer a slave of sin. I have been set free and have become a slave of God and His righteousness.
5. I will bear fruit to holiness,
6. the wages of my sin have been paid for by. Jesus and I have been granted eternal life in Christ Jesus, my Lord.

Home groups

Discuss baptism in light of what taught. How is Jesus giving you more faith to apply to the sacred events of the church that originated in Jesus?

Discuss **The Lord is calling us to a pathway of obedience as disciples.** There are things He wants to unfold and release to you. Water baptism opens the way to things that will never happen in your life until you take that pathway to obedience.

Discuss the difference between a symbol and a sacrament.

- A sacrament is an encounter with the uncreated grace (energies) of God.
- It becomes sacred because God actually acts through it, not just symbolically.
- The **sacrament is a real participation in divine life**
- Grace is truly given because Christ acts through the sacrament, God actually uses touch points from heaven that He fills with Himself so they are no longer ordinary things but holy unto the Lord. (Body, Blood, waters, oil)
- *Many Protestant limit the miraculous mystery of God using physical elements like the wine and bread, waters of baptism, anointing of oil, etc. I believe many have been guilty of viewing these things as symbols or tokens of remembrance rather than sacred, infused by the Holy Spirit that are meant to enter into with expectation and faith in the miraculous provision and the real presence of Jesus Christ.*

Take a moment to discuss the discipleship involved prior to being baptized in the early church as noted in the teaching. Have we made baptism too easy in our western culture?