Baffled by Water Baptism
1 Corinthians 15:29

I. Intro

- Anecdote

- Division

  - When it comes to the major beliefs of the Christian faith - - Water Baptism is one of the most hotly debated doctrines that we find in the Bible.

    - And it's sad to say that this subject has caused quite the controversy amongst Christians - throughout the church age.

      - For example - the church was divided by the false teachers who insist that water baptism is necessary for salvation.

        - Not only that - but - churches have also been divided over the issue of Infant Baptism.

          - Then there are those who argue about the proper way to baptize believers…

            - …which not only includes the debate about sprinkling verses immersion…

              - …but - there are also those who disagree about the proclamation that should be presented at the time of baptism.

II. Outline

- Points

- Confusion

  - In light of these things - there should be no doubt that the debate about water baptism has affected every church.

- And if all of this isn't bad enough - it's here in our text today - where we find Paul addressing those who were being baptized for the dead.

  - It's for this reason that Christians have been debating the meaning of this verse - for the past 2000 years.

    - And as we spend our time studying this confusing - and controversial passage - we're going take the time to consider how...

      1. …Water Baptism is Sacramental

      2. …Water Baptism is Symbolical

      3. …Water Baptism is Sequential

        - With this as our outline - let's open our Bibles to 1st Corinthians chapter 15...

          - ...where we find Paul - continuing to address those who were questioning the resurrection of Jesus.

III. Sacramental

- Set up

- Context

  - As we make our way to the 15th chapter of 1st Corinthians - I wanna take a moment to put our text - back into it's context.

    - It was back in the beginning of this chapter - where Paul presented prophetic proof - of Jesus' death - burial - - and resurrection.

      - And knowing that there were some at the church in Corinth who were questioning the physical resurrection of Jesus…

        - …Paul took the time to present them with an argument - in order to help them gasp the reality of the resurrection.

- Now - here in our text today - we find Paul - appealing to a vicarious baptism - that some seemed to be engaging in…

  - …as further evidence that Christ Jesus has in fact risen from the grave.

    - With this as our focus - let's pick up our study of 1st Corinthians 15 look with me there at verse 29 - where Paul asked…

- Text

  1Co 15:29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?

  - Question

    - Here in this verse - we find Paul - continuing to address those who were questioning the physical resurrection of Jesus.

      - He did this by asking them why they were baptizing for the dead - if in fact Christ is not risen.

        - Now - you might not know this - but - this verse has caused a great deal of confusion - and contention - throughout the church age.

          - And it's for this reason that Christian teachers have offered as many as 30 interpretations of this passage…

            - …in an attempt to explain what Paul meant - when he referred those who were being baptized for the dead.

- They

  - With this in mind - we should consider WHO Paul was referring to - when he referred to those who were baptized for the dead.

    - Look with me again - there at verse 29 - where he asked…

1Co 15:29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?

- As we take a closer look at this verse - we must not fail to notice Paul's use of the word - THEY.
  - Those who study the epistles of Paul will notice his use of the words - WE - and US - in reference to believers in the church.
    - He also used the words - THEY and THEM in reference to the unbelievers who were in the world.
      - And it's here in this verse where we find Paul using the word THEY in reference to those who were being baptized for the dead.
        - What this seems to suggest is that Paul was referring to a religious ritual that was probably taking place in a pagan cult.

- Proxy
  - You might not know this - but - baptism for the dead was a practice that was common in the pagan religions of Greece.
    - And seeing how the same Greek culture rejected the physical resurrection of the dead…
      - …then - the chances are - there were Christians at the church in Corinth who were being led astray…
        - …by unbelieving family members who rejected the resurrection - while simultaneously being baptized for those who were deceased.
          - And if that's the case - Paul was presenting this question - in order to help his audience to understand that…
            - …the religious ritual of being baptized for the dead made no sense IF in fact - there is no resurrection from the dead.

- Proxy

- In my opinion - this seems to be the most logical interpretation of this verse.

  - At the same time - there are those who think that Paul was referring to Christians - who were taking part in a similar sort of baptism…

    - …in order to bear witness to the faith of fellow believers who had died for their faith in Jesus - prior to being baptized.

      - And while it's possible that there were Christians in Corinth - who were beginning to engage in this religious ritual…

        - …Paul's question should in NO WAY be seen as his approval of the practice.

          - Sadly - this didn't stop the leaders of the Mormon church - from using this verse as justification for their vicarious baptism.

- Mormons

  - Here's how the leaders of the Latter-day Saints explain it on their website - where we read…

    The New Testament indicates that baptisms for the dead were done during the time of the Apostle Paul. This ordinance was restored with the establishment of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

    - In other words - the LDS church took an obscure question about those who were being baptized for the dead…

      - …and they used that questionable question as the basis for leading the members of the Mormon church…

        - …to serve as proxies - who are baptized on behalf of a deceased person - who died before becoming a Mormon.

          - And while those who engage in this religious ritual believe that they are providing deceased people with a way to be saved…

- …what the Mormons fail to understand is that - baptism is not a means for salvation.

- Definition

  - In order to prove my point - let's take some time to define the term that Paul was using here in our text today.

    - The word - baptized - found there in verse 29 - was translated from the Greek word - baptizō.

      - And baptizō - comes from the root word - baptō - which simply speaks of something that is completely submerged - and entirely immersed.

        - In similar fashion — the Greek word - - Baptizo - was used in reference to the ceremonial washings...

          - ...that the priests would receive - as they consecrated themselves for service at the temple.

            - And seeing how Jesus is our Heavenly High Priest - He was consecrated by John the Baptist - through water baptism.

- Why?

  - We should consider another reason for why Jesus was baptized in the Jordan river.

    - Hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn in our Bibles to the gospel of John - I'd like you to turn to John chapter 1.

      - Ans as we make our way to the first chapter of John's gospel account - I wanna take a moment to point out that…

        - …there are many who have been led to believe that water baptism is necessary for salvation.

          - And those who insist that we must be baptized in water - in order to be saved…

- …will mistakenly appeal to the baptism of Jesus as proof of their point.

  - That being the case - we should take a moment to consider the reason for why Jesus was baptized by John.

- Revealing

  - Let's consider the apostle John's account of the day when Jesus was baptized.

    - Look with me there at John chapter 1 - beginning there at verse 29 - where John writes…

      Jhn 1:29 The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, "Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!
      Jhn 1:30 "This is He of whom I said, 'After me comes a Man who is preferred before me, for He was before me.'
      Jhn 1:31 "I did not know Him; but that He should be revealed to Israel, therefore I came baptizing with water."
      Jhn 1:32 And John bore witness, saying, "I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and He remained upon Him.
      Jhn 1:33 "I did not know Him, but He who sent me to baptize with water said to me, 'Upon whom you see the Spirit descending, and remaining on Him, this is He who baptizes with the Holy Spirit.'
      Jhn 1:34 "And I have seen and testified that this is the Son of God."

      - Here in these verses - we learn about the day when John the Baptist - baptized the Lord Jesus in the Jordan river.

        - And listen - the Lord Jesus wasn't baptized in water - because He needed to be saved.

          - No - instead - this was God's way of revealing the identity of our Messiah to the nation of Israel.

            - John was sent to baptize people in the Jordan river - so that he could reveal the Lamb of God - Who takes away the sin of the world.

- That being the case - those who appeal to the baptism of Jesus as the basis for baptismal regeneration - are simply wrong.

- Application
  - Salvific?

    - Further proof of my point can be found back in the first chapter of 1st Corinthians - it's beginning at verse 14 - where Paul declared…

      1Co 1:14 I thank God that I baptized none of you except Crispus and Gaius,
      1Co 1:15 lest anyone should say that I had baptized in my own name.
      1Co 1:16 Yes, I also baptized the household of Stephanas. Besides, I do not know whether I baptized any other.
      1Co 1:17 For Christ did not send me to baptize, but to preach the gospel, not with wisdom of words, lest the cross of Christ should be made of no effect.

      - Now listen - if water baptism is necessary for salvation - then Paul was wrong when he declared…

        - "…Christ did not send me to baptize - but to preach the gospel…"

          - If water baptism is necessary for our salvation - then it should be part of the gospel message that Paul was preaching.

            - And since Paul presented a clear distinction between the sacrament of water baptism - and the gospel message…

              - …then - we can be certain that those who preach baptism as a means of salvation - are leading people astray.

  - Sacrament

    - That being the case - those who were being baptized for the dead - were failing to realize that…

- …their religious ritual wasn't able to produce the desired outcome - which was salvation for the deceased.

  - And in similar fashion - those who are preaching water baptism as a work that is necessary for salvation…

    - …are also failing to realize that they are preaching a false gospel - which cannot save.

      - Please trust me when I tell you that - water baptism is simply a sacred sacrament…

        - …which Christ Jesus ordained - to signify our connection with His death - burial - and resurrection.

          - And it's for this reason that Jesus directed His apostles to baptize every new disciple.

- Commission

  - We find this command in Matthew chapter 28 - it's beginning at verse 18 - where He declared…

    Mat 28:18 "All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.
    Mat 28:19 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
    Mat 28:20 "teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age." Amen.

  - Here in the great commission - we find the Lord Jesus - directed His apostles…

    - …to baptize every new disciple - in the name of the Father - the Son - and Holy Spirit.

      - And what this means is that - a person must become a born-again believer - before receiving the sacred sacrament of Baptism.

- That being the case - every form of baptismal regeneration - including baptism by proxy…

  - …is based on unbiblical beliefs - that are in conflict with the word of God.

- Transition

- Points

  - Now - this brings us to our second point - because listen…

1. …Water Baptism is not only Sacramental…

2. …but - Water Baptism is also Symbolical

   - In order to explain what I mean - let's make our way - back to 1st Corinthians chapter 15…

     - …where we find Paul - addressing those who were questioning the resurrection of Jesus.

       - Look with me again - there at verse 29 - where Paul asked…

IV. Symbolical

- Text

1Co 15:29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?

- Interpretation

  - As we take another look at this verse - I should remind you that there are at least 30 different interpretations of what Paul meant.

    - This includes the interpretation presented by Theodore Beza - the Protestant theologian who insisted that…

- …Paul was referring to the washing of the dead bodies - among the Jews and Christians - before being buried.

- This pre-burial washing was in expectation of the resurrection - - because - you know - no one wants to go to heaven - dirty.

- The main problem with this interpretation is based on the fact that the Greek word - baptizo - speaks of full submersion.

- That being the case - it's a stretch on the text to think that Paul was referring to some sort of pre-burial washing.

- Interpretation

- It was pastor - and prolific author - Philip Doddridge - who assured us that Paul was referring to those who presented themselves for baptism…

- …immediately after the martyrdom of their brethren, or at their funerals; as if fresh soldiers should enlist and press forward to the assault…

- …to supply the places of those who had fallen in battle.

- Thus they professed their faith in Christ - and ventured the rage of their enemies at the very time when others had been put to death.

- Simply put - these courageous Christians were baptized for those who were recently martyred…

- …in order to present their persecutors with a clear demonstration of their commitment to Christ.

- And if that's the case - that Paul was asking them why they were doing this - IF in fact there is no resurrection from the dead.

- Interpretation

- John MacArthur presented his take on this text - by assuring us that those who are baptized for the dead - is a reference to living believers…

- …who gave outward testimony to their faith in baptism by water because they were first drawn to Christ…

- …by the exemplary lives, faithful influence, and witness of believers who had subsequently died.

- Paul was presenting this question in order to challenge those who were denying the physical resurrection of believers to explain…

- …why people were coming to Christ - to follow the hope of those who have died - IF there is no resurrection and no life after death.

- And while it's possible that MacArthur was correct in his interpretation…

- …it also seems possible that Paul was questioning them about the symbolism of water baptism.

- Verse

- Let's consider how the scholars who created the New International Version of the Bible rendered verse 29 - here's how they put it…

1Co 15:29 Now if there is no resurrection, what will those do who are baptized for the dead? If the dead are not raised at all, why are people baptized for them?

- As we take another look at this question - I wanna look past the confusion concerning who was being baptized for the dead - and why…

- …and I wanna take a moment to consider how the symbolism of baptism was in conflict…

- …with the beliefs of those who were rejecting physical resurrection from the dead.

- Think about it - IF there is no bodily resurrection from the dead - then why engage in a religious ritual…

- …that symbolizes the physical death - burial - and bodily resurrection of those who trust in Jesus.

- Noah

  - In order to explain the issue - let's first consider how Paul referred to water baptism - as an antitype of Noah's flood.

    - Hold your place here in 1st Corinthians - and let's turn to 1st Peter chapter 3 and as we make our way to the 3rd chapter - of Peter's 1st epistle...
      - ...I want to remind you about the events that transpired - during the days of Noah.

        - According to Moses - - Noah was living in a time - when the wickedness of man was great in the earth.

          - Not only that - but - the thoughts and intents of men's hearts - were only evil continually.

            - And while it's true that - the Lord decided to punish the widespread wickedness of mankind - - with a worldwide flood...

              - ...it's also true that Noah found favor in the eyes of the Lord — which is why he - and his family - were spared from the flood.

- Baptism?

  - With this background in mind - let's consider the point that Peter was making - here in 1st Peter chapter 3.

    - Look with me - there in the middle of verse 20 - where Peter referred to the period of time when...

      1Pe 3:20b ...the Divine longsuffering waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was being prepared, in which a few, that is, eight souls, were saved through water.
      1Pe 3:21 There is also an antitype which now saves us—baptism (not the removal of the filth of the flesh, but the answer of a good conscience toward God), through the resurrection of Jesus Christ,

1Pe 3:22 who has gone into heaven and is at the right hand of God, angels and authorities and powers having been made subject to Him.

- Now - as we consider Peter's point - - it's sad to say that - many people have been tripped up by this text.
  - One reason why is due to the fact that - - Peter seems to be saying that water baptism is necessary for salvation.
    - And while there are many who use this passage to insist that - we're saved through water baptism...
      - ...I can assure that - this would be an improper interpretation of this tough text.
        - In order to prove my point - let's consider the symbolical simulation that Peter was actually pointing to.

- Through
  - First of all - we must not fail to recognize that - Noah and his family weren't saved **IN** the water - - but rather - they were saved **THROUGH** the water.
    - Remember - the flood waters were actually the judgment of God on the unrepentant - - and those who got wet - - they died.
      - Meanwhile - Noah and his family were sealed up - safe and dry - - inside the Ark - which is clearly a symbol of our Savior - Jesus.
        - And listen - if the Ark is a symbol of Christ Jesus — and the water is a symbol of God's Judgment...
          - ...then - the symbolical simulation that we see in the story of the flood - presents us with a picture...
            - ...of those who are spared from the judgment of God - because our lives have been hidden in the spiritual Ark of Jesus Christ.

- Water Baptism

- With that being the case - I can assure you that - - Peter wasn't trying to tell us that water baptism now saves us.
  - No - - instead - - he was letting us know that - - the sacrament of water baptism - is an antitype of the flood.
    - In other words - water baptism is a pattern - or - a symbol - that corresponds to the flood of Noah.
      - And listen - if our water baptism - is a symbolical simulation - which was patterned after the flood of Noah...
        - ...then - it only stands to reason that - water Baptism is actually a sacramental submersion...
          - ...which was designed to declare the salvation that we have - in the spiritual ark of our Savior - Jesus.

- Symbolism
  - What this means is that the symbolism of water baptism isn't good work that saves us.
    - No - instead - the religious ritual of water baptism is a symbolical sacrament that helps us to remember that…
      - …those who have placed their faith in the death - burial - and resurrection of Jesus…
        - …will also rise up from the grave - according to the power of Christ's resurrection.
          - And listen - the truth of this is portrayed in the way that those who are baptized are symbolically buried underwater…
            - …and then - physically raised up from the judgment water - symbolizing the resurrection from the dead.

- Application

- Symbolic

  - I like the way that Paul explained it - in Romans chapter 6 - it's beginning at verse 3 - where he asked…

    Rom 6:3 …do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into His death?
    Rom 6:4 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.
    Rom 6:5 For if we have been united together in the likeness of His death, certainly we also shall be in the likeness of His resurrection,

  - Now - listen - when we were baptized into water - - we weren't literally baptized into the death of Jesus Christ.

    - No - instead - those who are fully immersed into baptism water - are symbolically baptized into His death.

      - And just as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father…

        - …those who are raised up from baptism waters - are being raised up from the dead - symbolically.

          - What this means is that water baptism is NOT salvific - no - instead it's a symbolic sacrament that is for those who trust in Jesus.

- Transition

- Points

  - Now - this brings us to our third and final point - because listen…

1. …Water Baptism is not only Sacramental…

2. …and - Water Baptism is not only Symbolical…

3. …but - Water Baptism is also Sequential

- In order to explain what I mean - let's make our way - back to 1st Corinthians chapter 15…

- …where we find Paul - addressing those who were questioning the resurrection of Jesus.

- Look with me again - there at verse 29 - where Paul asked…

V. Sequential

- Text

  1Co 15:29 Otherwise, what will they do who are baptized for the dead, if the dead do not rise at all? Why then are they baptized for the dead?

- Interpretation

- As we take another look at this verse - we should consider the interpretation of a Theologian named Henry Hammond.

- Hammond insisted that those who were baptized for the dead - were baptized in the faith and profession.

- In other words - Hammond was of the opinion that the person being baptized was required to make a profession of faith…

- …which would include a creed that contained a statement about the dead - being raised physically from the grave.

- If that's the case - then - Paul was asking them why they made this profession of faith at the time of their baptism…

- …if in fact - they didn't really believe in the bodily resurrection of believers.

- COC

- As we consider Hammond's interpretation of this verse - I can't help but to consider how close this is to the heresy held by the Church of Christ.

- Here's how they explain it on the official church of Christ website - where we read…

  We believe baptism by immersion is an essential part of salvation through Christ. It is the only way to be baptized into Christ so that we may enter into his everlasting covenant. According to the scriptures, we believe the path to salvation is: Faith in Jesus Christ, Repentance of sins, Verbal Confession of our belief, and Baptism in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins.

  - From this - we can see that the leaders at the Church of Christ are leading their congregants to reject the Biblical doctrine of salvation by faith alone.

    - And listen - they not only insist that water baptism is necessary for salvation…

      - …but - they also insist that a confession of faith must be made - before their baptism can be legitimate.

        - Many even insist that a confession of faith must be made at the time of their baptism…

          - …in order to ensure that they receive the forgiveness of sins - followed by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit.

- Problem

  - The main problem with this position is based on the fact that - it fails to line up with the Biblical doctrine of water baptism.

    - In order to prove my point - let's consider the day when the first converts to the Christian faith - were baptized.

      - With this as our focus - let's turn in our Bibles - to Acts chapter 10 - you see - it's here the 10th chapter of Acts…

        - …where we find the apostle Peter - preaching the gospel message to the Gentiles at the home of a Roman soldier named Cornelius.

          - Peter not only described the miraculous ministry of our Messiah…

- …but - he also informed them about the day - when the Jews in Jerusalem killed Jesus - by hanging Him on a tree.

- Then - after he assured them of Jesus' resurrection - - he informed them that those who believe in Him will receive remission of sins.

- Cornelius

- It was at that point in time when those who believed the message that Peter was preaching - received the Holy Spirit.

- Let's consider Luke's account found here in Acts chapter 10 - look with me beginning there at verse 44 - where Luke writes…

Act 10:44 While Peter was still speaking these words, the Holy Spirit fell upon all those who heard the word.
Act 10:45 And those of the circumcision who believed were astonished, as many as came with Peter, because the gift of the Holy Spirit had been poured out on the Gentiles also.
Act 10:46 For they heard them speak with tongues and magnify God. Then Peter answered,
Act 10:47 "Can anyone forbid water, that these should not be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we have?"
Act 10:48 And he commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord. Then they asked him to stay a few days.

- Here in these verses - we find Luke - describing the way that the Gentiles at Cornelius house…

- …were saved by faith in the gospel message that Peter was preaching.

- The proof that they were saved is found in the fact that they were filled with the Holy Spirit…

- …and the proof that they were filled with the Holy Spirit was based on the fact that they were speaking in tongues.

- That being the case - Peter commanded them to receive the sacrament of water baptism.

- Sequence

  - With all of this in mind - let's take a moment to consider the sequence of events that took place on that day.

    - The gentiles at Cornelius house first heard the gospel of grace - which is centered around the death - the burial - and the resurrection of Jesus.

      - Then - as they listened to gospel that Peter was preaching - - they believed in the message of our Messiah.

        - And at the very moment of their faith - they were born-again - by the power of the Holy Spirit…

          - …which resulted in the spiritual baptism - by which they were empowered with the signifying gift of tongues.

            - After that - they were baptized in water - according to the sacrament that symbolizes our death - burial - and resurrection.

              - And as we consider this sequence of events - there should be no doubt that water baptism is not necessary for salvation.

- Immersion

  - In order to further prove my point - we should consider the difference between the water baptism of John…

    - …and the two different Baptisms that Jesus provides - to every single person.

      - With this as our focus - let's make our way to Luke chapter 3 - and as we make our way to Luke 3…

        - …I should take a moment to remind you that the Greek word - Baptizo is a word that speaks of submersion - - or immersion.

- The clearest example that shows the meaning of this word - is found in an ancient recipe for making pickles…

  - …which includes the process of baptizing a cucumber into vinegar solution - in order to create a pickle.

    - What this means is that - the word - baptism - doesn't automatically infer water - as the substance into which something is submerged.

- Application

- Spirit/Fire

  - That being the case - we should consider the different baptisms that John the Baptist mentioned - here in Luke chapter 3.

    - Look with me - beginning at verse 15 - where Luke writes...
      Luk 3:15 Now as the people were in expectation, and all reasoned in their hearts about John, whether he was the Christ or not,
      Luk 3:16 John answered, saying to all, "I indeed baptize you with water; but One mightier than I is coming, whose sandal strap I am not worthy to loose. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.
      Luk 3:17 "His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather the wheat into His barn; but the chaff He will burn with unquenchable fire."

      - Here in these verses - we find John - presenting us with three different baptisms.

        - And while it's true that John's baptism included an immersion into water - he also informs us that...

          - ...the Lord Jesus has two different baptisms - which includes the Holy Spirit - - and Fire.

            - Or in other words - those who reject the Lord Jesus - will eventually be baptized - or - immersed into the unquenchable fires of hell...

- ...while those who trust in Him will be baptized - or fully immersed into the Holy Spirit of God.

- Jesus

  - The Lord Jesus confirmed this - in Acts chapter 1 - when He commanded His disciples...

    Act 1:4b ...not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the Promise of the Father, “which,” He said, “you have heard from Me;
    Act 1:5 “for John truly baptized with water, but you shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”

    - Based on this - we can see that the Lord Jesus agreed with John the Baptist...

      - ...and He did this - by drawing a doctrinal distinction between John’s baptism - - which was a submersion into water...

        - ...and the spiritual immersion that Jesus provides - to those who trust in Him.

          - Christian - listen - it’s at the moment of our conversion to Christ - when we are born of the Spirit….

            - …and this is the spiritual baptism by which we are saved.

- Application

  - Sequence

    - I like the way that Paul explained it - in Ephesians chapter 1 - it’s beginning at verse 13 - where he declared...

      Eph 1:13 In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,
      Eph 1:14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

- Let's consider the sequence of events that Paul was describing - as he informs us that…

  - …those who hear - and receive the word of truth - will also believe the gospel of grace.

    - And as we believe in the gospel of grace - - we receive the Holy Spirit of God - Who seals us into the body of Christ.

      - It's at that moment when our lives are hidden with Christ - in God...

        - ...as the Holy Spirit sanctifies us - by washing away our sins - with the pure water of the word.

- Water Baptism

  - Notice that Paul made no mention of water baptism - and the reason why was because…

    - …the Lord Jesus didn't send him to baptize people into water - no - instead - he was sent to preach the gospel of grace.

      - What this means is that - water baptism is a symbolic sacrament - that we receive - - after we've already been saved by faith in Jesus.

        - And being that water baptism cannot save a sinner from the fires of hell - there is no reason for us to think that…

          - …Christian can help a deceased person to get saved - by receiving a vicarious baptism for those who are already dead.

            - It's for this reason that every Christian should become believers who are committed to the great commission of Christ Jesus…

              - …so that we can make disciples of every tribe - tongue and nation - baptizing them in the name of the Father - Son - and Holy Spirit.

VI. Conclusion

- Wrap up

- Points

  - Now - as we begin to wrap up this study - it's my hope that this message has helped you to better understand water baptism.

    - And so - if you're still Baffled by Water Baptism - - then - allow me sum it up with simplicity - by reminding you that…

      1. …Water Baptism is a Sacramental work…

         - …that Christ Jesus ordained in order to signify our connection with His death - burial - and resurrection.

      2. …Water Baptism is also Symbolical work…

         - …which serves as a symbol of being buried with Jesus in death - and raised to newness of life.

      3. …and finally - Water Baptism is Sequential work…

         - …which should be accomplished - after a person has become a born again believer - by faith in Jesus Christ.

           - What this means is that - those who insist that water baptism is necessary for salvation - are preaching a damnable heresy.

             - And it's for this reason that we should correct them - so that they might not be baffled - by water baptism.