

Baptizo

Acts 2:37-41 “Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, ‘Brethren, what shall we do?’ Peter *said* to them, ‘Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For the promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off, as many as the Lord our God will call to Himself.’ And with many other words he solemnly testified and kept on exhorting them, saying, ‘Be saved from this perverse generation! So then, those who had received his word were baptized; and that day there were added about three thousand souls.”

OPENING

Burn the Ships

for KING & COUNTRY - burn the ships (Official Music Video)

This album, ‘Burn the Ships’, from King & Country, was conceived when Luke Smallbone's wife, Courtney, was battling addiction and all that comes along with it.... She one day chose to literally “flush the pills”, and never looked back. He recalls. Quote, “She said, ‘Luke I need to flush these pills because these pills represent so much guilt and shame in my life. I don’t want to be consumed by my past anymore. I want to move into a new day and to what’s before me.’”

"The album title came from that moment combined with an old history lesson. “I read a story about an explorer going to a new land. When he arrived on the shore, he calls everybody off of the ships and said, ‘Hey let’s go explore this land and see what there is to be seen,’” Luke explains. “All the men were terrified of going into the unknown and he realized that even those boats were grimy, stinky and small, they wanted to stay on the boats because it was familiar. The next day he calls them out again and when all the sailors were on land, he gives the command to burn the ships because he said, ‘We’re not going to retreat. We’re going to move forward in our lives.’ The flushing of the pills was the burning of the ships for my wife and for us to step into a new world, a new day.”

In Spanish, still today, the expression “*quemar las naves*” (burn the ships) is used. Its meaning is to eliminate any possibility of retreating in front of a problem. The origin of this expression is found in a historical episode.

Actually, Cortés did not burn the ships. The story was something different.

Hernán Cortés was a Spanish conqueror who led the conquest of Mexico. Like all the conquests, that of Mexico was not easy and Cortés had to face the dangers of an unknown land and, in addition, to the problems caused by his own soldiers.

In a certain moment of the exploration of Mexico, Cortés and his men were near the sea. Cortés wanted to continue the expedition inland, partly to discover new territories and partly to get away from his rival, the conqueror Diego Velázquez, who was in Cuba. But the sailors who accompanied Cortés did not agree. They were afraid of the dangers that could be in the interior of the country. Cortés, to prevent his men from retreating or to unite with his enemy, Velázquez, sank some of his ships. In this way, the backward movement was impossible and there was no other option but to move forward.

Years later, in the chronicles, the writers told this anecdote but saying that Cortés had burned the ships. Hence the origin of the Spanish expression 'burn the ships' that means to eliminate the possibility of retiring before a problem. It is an expression that any Spanish speaker relates to Hernán Cortés, even though the conquistador never burned the ships, but sank them, obtaining the same result.

Long before Cortés, Caesar landed in 53 BC with roughly 12,000 men. They struggled with the climate of England vs the warmer Mediterranean Sea. Some reports claim that yes, they burned the boats. 2000 years ago when Caesar set out to conquer England by water, he found himself face to face with his own soldiers preparing to retreat because they were swallowed by their own fears--some very real and valid ones at that. History says Julius Caesar famously said, "If you want to take the island, burn the boats!"

Caesar, who knew a few things about the art of war, ordered all the ships to be burned. This was a powerful message to his enemies, but an even more powerful one to his own men. With no ability to retreat, his army was now 100% committed to doing whatever it took to succeed. And if they didn't, it certainly would not be for lack of effort or courage.

Burning of the ships, or better understood, sinking of ships has been repeated throughout time during maritime wars. We would say "burn, burning, or burned bridges" in our day. The historical Cortés was one the more biblically accurate, intentional or not, than any of the other recorded events.

What word do you think in the scriptures best defines what these actions demonstrate? Why?

The Greek word you may be familiar with is "baptizo", "βαπτίζω", in English the word is baptize. In our Christian culture today we have, far and in the most part, a misconception of this word. For most, including ministers around the world, They have been misguided to believe that an individual can be “baptized” in water for their forgiveness of sins and return to their lives living the same way before that moment. This type of “baptism” is called “bapto”. By the end of this teaching, I am praying that we will all have a clearly defined understanding of the word “baptizo” and “bapto”

INTERLUDE

Upon Abi’s and my arrival a few months ago went through a discipleship course with Pastor Pete and others where we, in class, got on the subject of baptism. Just as a brief refresher, the four types of baptism:

1. Baptized into Salvation

a. Romans 10:9-11, 13

i. Confession brings justification and Belief, in that moment, is Salvation Baptism

ii. Those first moments will never happen again as long as we immersed in Christ

b. Other Scriptures include Mark 16:16, Acts 8:12, Acts 16:15, Acts 16:33, Acts 18:8

c. Romans Road of Scripture

i. Romans 3:10 – “There is none righteous, not even one”

ii. Romans 3:23 – “for all [a]have sinned and fall short of the glory of God”

iii. Romans 5:8 – “But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

iv. Romans 5:12 – “Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned.”

v. Romans 6:23 – “For the wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”

vi. Romans 10:9-11 – “... if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in justification, and with the mouth he confesses, resulting in salvation. For the Scripture says, ‘Whoever believes in Him will not be disappointed.’”

vii. Romans 10:13 – “for ‘Whoever will call on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”

I have always added one more scripture to this journey and explain what repentance, believing, and baptism in Jesus Christ is:

viii. Romans 12:1-2 Therefore I urge you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice, acceptable to God, which is your spiritual service of worship. And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, so that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and [e]acceptable and perfect.

Romans Road lays out the plan of salvation through a series of Bible verses from the book of Romans. When arranged in order, these verses form an easy, systematic way of explaining the message of salvation. There are many different versions of Romans Road with slight variations in Scriptures, but the basic message and method is the same.

For time restraints, the other baptisms with scripture references for you to study are:

2. Baptized with water –

a. Acts 10:46-48 “For they were hearing them speaking with tongues and exalting God. Then Peter answered, ‘Surely no one can refuse the water for these to be baptized who have received the Holy Spirit just as we did, can he?’ And he ordered them to be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then they asked him to stay on for a few days.”

i. This scripture, as well as many others, reveals that baptism unto salvation is indeed the first to begin a relationship with Christ.

ii. As it has been taught for years, water baptism is an outward expression of that which occurred internally.

b. John 3:23, Acts 8:35-37, Acts 10:47

3. Baptized with the Holy Spirit - Acts 1:4-6, Acts 11:15-17

4. Baptized with Fire - Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16, Hebrews 1:7, Hebrews 12:29, 1 Peter 1:7

5. Baptized in death - Mark 10:37-39, Romans 6:3, Galatians 3:27

WHAT IS BAPTIZO

Hebrews 6 Paul writes, “Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms and of laying on of hands, and of resurrection of the dead and of eternal judgment. And this we will do, if God permit.”

And it was this “doctrine of baptisms” that, during my studies this week, attempting, if you will, to summarize all of the baptisms, I came across an analogy that came close to communicating baptism well.

The metaphor came from an unlikely source.

It was from a Greek poet, physician, and grammarian named Nicander, who lived roughly 200 years before Christ was born. He was probably a part-time chef as well. In all likelihood, he knew nothing about our Savior or about baptism. However, at some point of time in his life, Nicander wrote out a recipe on how to make pickled vegetables. It is in this recipe that I discovered one of the best illustrations of baptism that I have ever come across.

In his recipe, Nicander wrote that in order to make pickled vegetables, they should first be dipped into boiling water, and then left immersed forever, in a vinegar solution. Obviously, he wrote all this in Greek.

The Greek word he used to describe the process of dipping the vegetable in hot water is the word “bapto”. And the Greek word he used to describe the process of leaving the vegetable immersed forever in vinegar, is the word baptizo.

Here is what is most interesting. Every single time the word baptism appears in the New Testament, the Greek word used is baptizo, not the word bapto. To be baptized does not mean to be dipped in Christ and then go on living the same lives we were living earlier. Not at all. To be baptized means to be left forever immersed in Christ, just as a pickle is left forever immersed in vinegar. When you taste a pickled vegetable, it tastes more like vinegar than the vegetable itself. This is what the faith that leads us to baptism should do to us. It should make us taste more of Christ than of ourselves.

While reading the story of the Rich Man and Lazarus in Luke 16, I was struck by the statement of the Rich Man who was suffering in Hades. He asked father Abraham to send Lazarus over that he might dip his finger in water and cool his tongue, for he was tormented in a flame (Luke 16:24). When I consulted the original language, “bapto” was the word translated by “dip.” Why did the translators put “dip” for “bapto,” but will not translate “baptidzo” by “dip,” or “immerse?” This would have alleviated a lot of confusion on the action of baptism.

Some people, I am sorry to say, have only been dipped [bapto] in water like the pickle. They have not changed their life which baptism [baptidzo] demands. The “old timers” used to say of these people, “They sat down on the creek bank” after they were baptized. In other words, they just got wet. But that is not the fault of water baptism. It is the lack of commitment on the part of the baptizer, discipleship and mentorship, as well as the one being baptized; the lack of knowledge. While this is the case with many in today’s world, a few are privileged to have the

support necessary and grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ, and remain faithful throughout their life.

BAPTISM DEMANDS A NEW LIFE

Water baptism [baptidzo—immersion] of the penitent believer is analogous also to the immersion [baptidzo] of the pickle, in that baptism is designed to produce in the subject a permanent change of relationship to the Lord. Paul declared to the Corinthians that if any man is in Christ, he is a new creation (2 Corinthians 5:12). That person baptized into Christ is a new creature (Galatians 3:26-27; 6:15). The baptized into Christ are therefore obligated to figuratively put to death the old man of sin, bury him away forever and rise to walk in newness of life:

The truth of baptism is incredibly profound, beautiful, meaningful, powerful, and transformative. I always struggle to find illustrations that can capture the full essence of it.

To be clear, it is not that act of baptism itself that brings about our transformation. It is the faith that leads us to baptism that changes us inside out. After all, baptism is but a later external expression of an earlier internal reality. Water baptism is a rich and beautiful ordinance or sacrament that our Lord Jesus Christ gave us. Through this, we celebrate our union with him in his life, death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is not only a beautiful celebration of beginning our life in Christ. It also reminds us of the power to live our lives in Christ.

Some time ago, as I was reading through the epistle to the Romans, I saw something profound.

Romans 6:1-7 “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it? Or do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death? Therefore, we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, so that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall also be in the likeness of His resurrection, knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, in order that our body of sin might be done away with, so that we would no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin.”

In Romans 6, the apostle Paul is charging believers not to keep on sinning because they have unending grace in Christ (Rom. 6:1). And then, Paul asks them a

seemingly rhetorical question. “Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death?” (Rom. 6:3). I say this question is rhetorical because Paul is writing about baptism to people who have already been baptized.

So why is Paul preaching baptism to people who have already been baptized? The answer is simple. Paul is pointing believers who are struggling with sin back to their baptism. Look back at the beauty of how you began your life in Christ with baptism. This is one place where you can find the power to now live faithfully, Paul seems to be telling them.

In other words, looking back at the beauty of our justification is one way we receive power for our sanctification. This is why a jar of pickles is such a helpful reminder of the meaning of baptism. Baptism is not being dipped into Christ just once. It is being immersed forever in Christ, in eternal union with him.

REFERENCES

New American Standard Bible®, Copyright © 1960, 1971, 1977, 1995 by The Lockman Foundation. All rights reserved.

Price, Deborah Evans. (10/8/2018). For King & Country on the Struggles That Informed 'Burn the Ships,' Their 'Most Mature Record' Yet. Retrieved from <https://www.billboard.com/music/rock/for-king-country-burn-the-ships-interview-8478875//>

Greek Bible Lexicon Dictionary. Search Results. Retrieved from <http://lexiconcordance.com/search7.asp?sw=baptize&sm=0&x=0&y=0> and others.