

Message Notes

Seeking the Lord Through Obedience

Seeking the Lord Together in 2005, #3

1 Peter 1:3-9 January 16, 2005

Message Outline

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What is baptism all about?

1. Baptism is outward SIGNIFICATION of an inward spiritual reality. ... union with and transformation by Jesus Christ. (Ti. 3:5)
2. Baptism is a personal IDENTIFICATION with Jesus Christ's death, burial and resurrection. (Col 2:12)
3. Baptism is a public PROCLAMATION of faith in Jesus Christ.
4. Baptism is a joyous CELEBRATION of new life in Jesus Christ.

Does baptism save a person?

No, salvation is by God's grace alone, through faith alone, in Jesus Christ alone. (Eph. 2:1-10) Baptism symbolizes outwardly what has already happened inwardly by faith.

Who should be baptized?

Those who have repented of their sins and come to personal faith in Jesus Christ. Those who have come to believe that they are weaker and more sinful than they dared imagine, but at the same time, more loved and accepted in Jesus, than they dared hope. Those who realize that Jesus Christ lived the life that they should have lived and died the death that they deserve.

Why should a person be baptized?

1. A person should be baptized because Jesus commanded us to be baptized. (Matthew 28:19)
2. A person should be baptized to publicly proclaim their faith in Jesus Christ, so that the church can celebrate together with them and so that the world will know of our identification with Jesus Christ. (Acts 8:38)

How can a person be saved and come into a life changing relationship with God through Jesus Christ?

Repent of your sins and your self-reliance and believe on the Lord Jesus Christ! (Acts 16:31) Repentance and faith must happen inwardly, but they can be expressed outwardly through a prayer something like this: *Lord Jesus Christ, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever dared admit, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt on the cross, taking what I deserved in order to offer me complete forgiveness. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as my Savior and Lord. Amen.*

Growth Group Understanding Questions

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1. Read Matthew 28:18-20. Why do we baptize believers here at Grace Church? Is baptism optional for believers of Jesus Christ?
2. Read Galatians 3:26-29. How does water baptism picture our spiritual identification with Jesus Christ? In other words, how is water baptism "an outward sign of inward reality?" What is the significance of being "in Christ" by faith?
3. Read Acts 8:26-40. What was necessary for the Ethiopian Eunuch to be baptized? What did he confess with his mouth and believe with his heart?
4. Read Romans 6:1-7. In verse 4, what does baptism signify? How should this reality affect the way we live/walk?

Growth Group Application Questions

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1. What were your impressions of our baptism service this last Sunday?
2. Why is it valuable for us to commit a Sunday worship service to the celebration of baptism, rather than relegating baptism to an evening or midweek service? How does baptism encourage the faith of others in the church?
3. Why should those who have put their faith in Christ, be baptized?
4. If you have been baptized, describe your baptism. When were you baptized? What was it like for you? How did you feel? Did you understand what you were doing?
5. Why do some Christians neglect the important biblical command to be baptized? Is it fear or negligence or something else that holds folks back? If you have not been baptized, discuss what is holding you back from this important piece of Christian obedience?

What are Growth Groups? *Growth Groups are designed to make Grace feel like a church instead of a crowd!
Growth Groups are small groups that meet for care, prayer and Bible study for 10 weeks each quarter.
Winter Growth Group enrollment begins January 2nd, with groups beginning to meet the week of January 16.
So rearrange your calendar, make time in your schedule, and jump into a Growth Group!*