



DEVOTIONAL MESSAGE

Why Baptism is Important ... by Gareth

READ MATTHEW 3:13-17

- The act of water baptism (being immersed in water in response to receiving salvation) is a very important first step in the Christian life. In *Matthew 3:13-17*, we see the Lord Jesus Himself coming to His cousin John to be baptized, in order to "fulfill all righteousness." He then went on to establish baptism as an eternal ordinance for His church, calling every believer to follow in His footsteps (See *Matthew 28:19*).
- A wedding ring is an outward sign that a person is married. A military uniform is an outward sign that a person is involved in that particular branch of service. Similarly, water baptism is a symbol designed by God to identify a person as a disciple of Jesus Christ.
- When we are saved, we are spiritually baptized into Christ (*Galatians 3:27*) and into His Body, the church (*1 Corinthians 12:13*) Baptism in water is an outward representation of these inward realities. In Biblical symbolism, water represents inner cleansing (*Ephesians 5:26, Hebrews 10:22*) and spiritual rebirth (*John 3:5*) both of which are central themes of baptism.
- Water baptism is, in essence, a funeral. It is an act of faith in which we testify, both to God and to the world, that the person we were before is dead and buried, and we are raised as a new creation in Christ. This is beautifully illustrated by following Scriptures
- "Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life." *Romans 6:4*.
- "Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead."-*Colossians 2:12*.
- Being baptized is a command from God, not an option. It is an act that God requires of every believer. In fact, among Jesus' last recorded words on earth were . "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved..." (*Mark 16:16*).
- You never read of an unbaptized Christian anywhere in the Bible. In fact, baptism immediately followed a person's salvation.
- *Acts 2: 38*. When the people respond to Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, the first thing he instructs them to do is "*Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.*" We further read in verse 41 that they "gladly received his word, and were baptized...."
- *Acts 8:26-40*. This is the account of Phillip leading the Ethiopian eunuch to Christ. As they finish their discussion, the eunuch enthusiastically asks "*What is hindering me from being baptized?*" to which Phillip replies "If you believe with all your heart, you may." Then they come to a body of water, and Philip promptly baptizes him.

(Continued next page)

WEEKLY EVENTS/NOTICES

Week 44

- *Acts 22:16.* The first thing the apostle Paul is told to do after his conversion was to be baptized. There are a number of other instances we could look at as well (*Acts 10:46-48; 16:14-15; 16:33; 18:8; 19:1-5.*) In each of these cases, notice the sense of urgency that is attached to baptism.
- plete until they had obeyed God by being baptized. Keep in mind that faith without works (corresponding actions) is dead (*James 2:17*) A living faith produces an obedient heart (*Matthew 7:21; Luke 6: 46; 1 John 2:3-4*) and water baptism is to be our first act of obedience.
- *"Therefore, if any person is (ingrafted) in Christ (the Messiah) he is a new creation (a new creature altogether); the old (previous moral and spiritual condition) has passed away. Behold, the fresh and new has come! - (2 Corinthians 5:17 Amplified Bible).*
 - As you can see, you have absolutely nothing to lose, and everything to gain by following Jesus in *John 14:15.* "If you love me, keep my commandments." Baptism is a simple, but profound act of obedience that you will carry with you for the rest of your life. If you have not yet taken this step, I strongly encourage you to do so as soon as possible.
 - Of course, we cannot take baptism without first embracing the reality that it represents: A living relationship with Jesus Christ. Without this, baptism is simply getting wet. If you have not given your heart to Him, why not do it now?

Events /Notices

- ▶ **For those who missed the Journey** to the Potter's House meeting, there is a complete version of the teaching online at a nominal charge of €7. The church will be happy to reimburse as long as you provide a receipt of your online payment. <http://www.ajourneytothepottershouse.com/watch-online>.
- ▶ **The Dublin city marathon** takes place this *Sunday 28th of October* so please be advised that there will be major traffic disruption around the city. <http://sseairtcitydublinmarathon.ie/traffic-information>.
- ▶ **Harvest extravaganza family** fun night will take place next *Friday Nov 2nd* at 7pm.
- ▶ **Roland LaHause will return** to Christian Assembly for a series of meetings beginning with a teaching seminar on *Friday 9th November*. Roland will also speak at the main meeting on *Sunday morning 11th* and also at an outreach meeting in the church on Sunday evening at 7pm