

Baptism and Union with Christ

Sermon 14 in the Romans Series

Romans 5:20-6:4

I. The Increase of Grace 5:20-21

A. The Purpose of the Law v. 20

Sin existed before the 10 Commandments were codified.

The 10 commandments existed – even in the heart of sinful man – before the tablets of stone – but they were repressed – pressed down and forsaken.

The purpose of the law is to show us that we are law-breakers – deserving of Hell but the gospel comes in to tell us that God saves sinners.

B. We have gained more in Christ – than we lost in Adam. v. 21

Martin Luther said, “Lord Jesus, you are my righteousness, I am your sin. You took on you what was mine, yet set on me what was yours. You became what you were not, that I might become what I was not.”

Galatians 3:24 -- ²⁴ Therefore the law was our tutor *to bring us* to Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

Spurgeon, “Sin may be a river, but grace is an ocean. Sin may be a mountain, but grace is like Noah’s flood, which prevailed over the tops of the mountains fifteen cubits upward.”

II. Spiritual Baptism = Union with Christ 6:1-2

We have died to sin.

When a slave dies, he is no longer a slave.

We have died to sin – how can we live in it?

Do we sin so we can get more grace? “Certainly not” is an idiom in Greek.

It’s a strong negation. Other translations ESV = by no means! KJV = God Forbid.

A. This Passage Explains Spiritual Baptism, not Water Baptism

Spiritual baptism is another name for regeneration.

It is an act of God’s free grace to bring us into union with Christ.

B. You can be saved without water baptism.

The thief on the cross is a prime example.

Only those who are already united to Christ can be baptized.

Why would a true Christian want to go on without the benefits of baptism?

Why would a Christian refuse to be baptized, when Christ Himself commissioned his disciples to baptize?

If you have been baptized into Christ spiritually, you may be baptized.

III. Water Baptism is an Illustration of Spiritual Baptism v. 3-4

Baptism is a sign and shadow of the reality that has already happened to us when we were put into Christ.

A. Baptism as a sign

Water baptism is a sign of what God has done for us in putting us into Christ. He died and we died. He rose and we rose.

B. Baptism as a seal

A seal is a guarantee of God's faithfulness to His promises.

God has promised to receive all who come to faith by Christ.

God has promised never to lose one who has come to Christ.

C. Signs and Seals are important, and must not be overvalued.

Baptism is a sign of salvation and a seal that salvation is really ours.

It means nothing if the reality of salvation is not present.

Rightly used, baptism (and the Lord's Supper) are a source of great comfort.

Seals in the Bible generally denote ownership.

See Ephesians 1:13-14; 4:30

Our Confession says in Chapter 29 paragraph 2

“Those who do actually profess repentance towards God, faith in, and obedience to, our Lord Jesus Christ, are the only proper subjects of this ordinance.”

They are the only two ordinances given to the church and two of the Lord's appointed means of grace to build up His people.

Spiritual baptism – regeneration – brings us into union with Christ.

We are “in Christ.” And we identify with our triune God in baptism.

Matt. 28:19-20