

## INTRODUCTION

This afternoon the church will have the joy of baptizing our dear sister Rita Ow. On this occasion, let me share with you some things from scriptures regarding baptism that I learned recently while studying how our Lord Jesus Himself was baptized. We came to this in Mark chapter one on Wednesday evening a few weeks ago, and I had to read and think and pray to understand what I long had wondered about: Why was our Lord Jesus baptized? In learning about that, I found some things I am now delighted to share with you, especially on this happy occasion.

## TEXT

Mark 1:1-11

## BODY

### I. Baptism Symbolizes God Forgiving the Sins of Those Who Repent

#### A. The bible teaches this repeatedly

1. Mark 1:4-5 John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of **repentance** for the **remission of sins**. (5) Then all the land of Judea, and those from Jerusalem, went out to him and were all baptized by him in the Jordan River, **confessing their sins**.
2. Acts 2:38 Then Peter said to them, "**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the **remission of sins**; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
3. Acts 22:16 And now why are you waiting? Arise and be baptized, and **wash away your sins**, calling on the name of the Lord.'
  - a) washing away rather than remission
  - b) calling on the name of the Lord rather than "repent"

#### B. The symbol is suitable to this

1. The symbolism of baptism that is evident when sinners repent is forgiveness/remission of sins. The quality of water that provides the picture is water's ability to wash or cleanse or purify what is immersed in it. e.g. dishes, clothes, but especially the human body
2. So, when all Jerusalem comes out to be baptized by John in the Jordan river, the most obvious thing being symbolized is the forgiveness or remission of sins from God that comes to those who repent. That forgiveness is being symbolized by the washing effect of water upon those immersed in it. Yes, if immersed in it, the thing symbolized is complete or thorough or total washing.

## II. The Lord Jesus Needed No Forgiveness of Sins

- A. That symbolism does not apply to Jesus of Nazareth, because he is sinless! He does not need to repent, and cannot repent, because He has no sin of which to repent. He cannot be forgiven any sin, because He has not sinned at all ever!
- B. How, then, can it be explained that He was baptized?

## III. The essential or necessary or most basic symbolism of baptism is not forgiveness of sins. The essential symbolism of baptism is the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

### A. The bible tells us that baptism symbolizes this

1. Romans 6:3-5 Or do you not know that as many of us as were baptized into Christ Jesus were **baptized into His death**? (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. (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,
2. Colossians 2:12 **buried with Him in baptism**, in which you also were **raised with Him** through faith in the working of God, who raised Him from the dead.

### B. The symbol is suitable for this

1. The quality of water that provides the picture is its ability to receive something under its surface, completely contain that thing in itself, then release the thing back out above its surface. e.g. dishes, clothes, but especially the human body
2. We know that if something already clean is immersed in water, no cleansing takes place. Things can be immersed in water for reasons other than cleaning them. e.g. to cool them, to soothe them, to soften them

### C. Since forgiveness of sins is founded on the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, it would follow that the symbol of forgiveness would be more basically the symbol of that death, burial, and resurrection

### D. This was probably not understood by those being baptized by John

### E. Our Lord Jesus, however perfectly understood the symbolism

1. So he seeks baptism not to symbolize forgiveness of sins, which He does not need, but His own future death, burial, and resurrection.

### F. The bible tells us that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, who has taken on our nature, to be human just as much as we are,

1. but that doesn't mean He has sin, because it is not necessary to be sinful to be human, as is proved by Adam and Eve when they were created.
2. so, if He is human just like we are, yet without sin, then He can be baptized just as we are, yet without His baptism symbolizing that He has been forgiven sins.

- IV. APPLICATION: we are taught here the “subject” of baptism
- A. who is to be baptized?
    - 1. those who have repented
    - 2. those who are calling on the name of the Lord Jesus
  - B. who is not to be baptized? everyone else
  - C. I hold that baptism has not taken place when someone who is not yet repenting of sin, calling on the name of the Lord is immersed in water
    - 1. baptism is an ordinance of our Lord Jesus
      - a) he set the terms
      - b) we are not at liberty to adjust them
    - 2. He said, “repent and be baptized”
      - a) no one is at liberty to change that around, and be baptized, then repent
      - b) to do so is to do something other than be baptized
    - 3. He said, “make disciples and baptize them”
      - a) no one is at liberty to change that around, and baptize them, then make them disciples
      - b) to do so is to do something other than baptizing
- V. APPLICATION: We are taught here the “mode” of baptism
- A. Baptism is the immersion of the body in water
  - B. Any lesser application of water to the body might provide a symbol of forgiveness or cleansing or washing (albeit a poor one!)
  - C. But no other use of water provides the essential symbol for baptism

## CONCLUSION

If you, the one needing forgiveness of sins, are commanded to repent for the forgiveness of sins, and be baptized to symbolize that; and you see that Jesus Himself was baptized to represent His death, burial, and resurrection; you can know that what you are commanded and what He has done are connected: by His death, burial, and resurrection, there is forgiveness of sins for you. You, repenting of sins and trusting in Jesus, have a part in His death, burial, and resurrection. It counts for you; you are included in it. All the punishment you deserve was taken by Him in His death; all the debt you owe was paid by Him; all the filth you have on you can be washed away in Him; burial of the old, sinful man you have been, can be yours in Christ; life as a new man and resurrection to eternal life are yours to be had in Jesus Christ. Repent of your sins; be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Be forgiven, be washed clean, through faith in Jesus Christ.

Call to Worship: 1 Peter 1:3

Scripture Reading: Jonah 3:1-10

Sermon: "Jesus Was Baptized" Mark 1:9

Benediction: John 11:25

G 131 O The Deep Deep Love Of Jesus- Dorita Piano, Camille Ukulele

T 290 When In His Might- Dorita Piano, Camille Flute

G 116 My Faith Has Found A Resting Place- Camille Piano, Dorita Sing

T 731 And Can It Be- Dorita Piano, Camille Sing