PUTTING ON CHRIST

Catechism Two, Lesson 16

Reading: Galatians 3:26–29

1. What Old Testament Pictures Foreshadowed Water Baptism?

In the Old Testament we find many types and shadows that were used by God to picture the realities which were to be fulfilled in the person of Christ and then in us as we participate in His life. These are but a few:

Type

Reality

(1) The blood of the lamb

The blood of Christ, the Lamb of God

(2) The Red Sea

The waters of baptism

(3) The High Priest, Aaron

Jesus Christ, our High Priest

(4) The altars of Israel

The Cross of Christ

(5) The Tabernacle and Temple

The Church of Jesus Christ

(6) The Sabbath Day

The believer’s rest in Christ

(7) The circumcision of the flesh

The circumcision of the heart

2. What Important Lessons Do We Learn From Israel’s Passage Through The Red Sea?

The Bible clearly teaches that Israel’s passage through the Red Sea was a baptism and typifies baptism into Christ. Paul said to the Corinthians:

Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea; And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea (1 Cor. 10:1, 2).

There are a number of important lessons to be learned here:

A. Baptism is a memorial.

A person is baptized in water because of the death of Christ. Christ died for him. Now by faith he is identifying himself with Christ’s death. Those of Israel who were baptized in the sea knew that a lamb had been slain for them. Their deliverance from Egypt had been purchased with the blood of that lamb.

B. Baptism involves a confession.

We have confessed our sins and our need. We have confessed that we not only commit sinful acts, but we are by nature sinners. Now we have been forgiven and freed from our sins. Similarly, Israel had confessed that they were slaves. They had cried to God for deliverance. The Lord heard them and delivered them.

C. Baptism declares a solemn determination.

When we rise from the waters of baptism, it is a declaration and determination to be finished with sin. We are embracing a new life and leaving the old behind. We realize that in no way is it possible to return to bondage. The Israelites were facing a new direction. They were determined to make Canaan their new home.

D. Baptism announces a separation.

When the waters rolled back by God’s intervention, Israel marched through on dry land. But the armies of Pharoah pursued them. God then allowed the waters to return. All the horses with their riders were drowned. The power behind our habitual sin is broken. But these same waters which give us deliverance, also cut us off from going back into the world. We may die in the wilderness if we rebel against God, but we cannot return to Egypt. Baptism should and must be our announcement of separation from sin and from the world.

E. Baptism means accepting a new identity.

We are no longer a sinner but a “saint.” We are set apart to God or sanctified. We no longer belong to ourselves but to Jesus Christ to whom we present ourselves as living sacrifices in water baptism. Our spirit, soul, body, mind—everything belongs to Christ. Israel was to be a part of Egypt no more. They were God’s people on their way to a new land. Because of this change of identity, our habits of fellowship also change. Our friends fit the person we have become in Christ.

3. With Whom Do We Become Associated Through Water Baptism?

Water baptism is an act of identification by faith; we receive a new status or identity in God. We are Christians because we belong to Christ. Baptism effectively joins us both to Christ and to His people. But this change also means the surrender of our old identity. Before putting on Christ in water baptism, our

identity was defined in terms of our reference groups in this world: nationality, economic and social status, sex roles, and the like. But these become meaningless in defining who we are once we are thoroughly identified with Christ.

A. We become Abraham’s seed and inherit his promises.

The Jews prided themselves in being descendants of Abraham, but they had lost the central ingredient that had made Abraham the Friend of God: faith. Instead, they were relying upon external identity. God was now making the difference between those who were His and those who were not. The true Jew or child of Abraham was now one on the inside, in the heart.

For he is not a Jew, which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh: But he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter; whose praise is not of men, but of God (Rom. 2:28, 29).

B. We put on Christ Himself.

We are not only baptized into the name of Christ and into His rule or Lordship, but into Him. For this reason, we can expect to live a completely new kind of life. We are no longer on our own. We have been caught up into the purposes of God. The center of our affections is no longer on ourselves.

Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God (Col. 3:2, 3).

C. We are placed in the Body of Christ.

Living for God is not as individualistic as we Americans would like to think. God desires a corporate expression of Himself in the earth. He picks us out of the world and makes us not only members of Himself, but of each other. This spiritual bond takes place through water baptism.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit. For the body is not one member, but many (1 Cor. 12:13, 14).

4. Does It Matter What Name Is Used In Baptizing?

Yes. The name is the expression of authority. The disciples were authorized to continue Christ’s work on earth “in His name”—as agents having the power of attorney. Both the power of His presence and the legal authority of His position at the right hand of God are resident in His name. All through the Bible, God has manifested Himself by name. The name needed in water baptism is the one showing the completeness of the entire Godhead: the Lord Jesus Christ.

A. All through the New Testament baptism was done in the name of the Lord Jesus.

The use of the name of Jesus was not merely to distinguish Christian baptism from the baptism of John, but to initiate the person into a relationship of submission to Jesus Christ as Lord.

Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ … 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 (Acts 2:36, 38).

B. The fulness of the Godhead is expressed in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus told His disciples to baptize “in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost” (Matt. 28:19). Notice this says “name,” not “names.” What is the name? Only in the Lord Jesus Christ is the full power and presence of the Godhead invoked.

For in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead, bodily. And ye are complete in him, which is the head of all principality and power (Col. 2:9, 10).

C. All things are to be done in the name of Jesus.

Everything His people do is to be done in His name. Healing the sick, casting out demons, preaching—all extension of His work is done in His own name.

And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him (Col. 3:17).

D. Just as Israel was baptized unto Moses, we are baptized unto a personal leader.

We are not baptized into a religion, a moral influence, a metaphysical state, or into some vague essence. Baptism places us into a living relationship with a real person. “The Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit” is a term expressing the important truth of the tri-unity of God, but it is not His personal name. These are but titles. We discover God’s personality in the face of Jesus Christ.

And, behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call his name JESUS (Luke 1:31).

5. When Should Baptism Be Administered?

As we look at the records of the early Church, we find that people were baptized as soon as they heard and responded to the gospel message. The only requirement was a true repentance and a living faith in Jesus Christ, the Son of God. As soon as repentance and faith were evident, people were instructed as to the meaning and necessity of water baptism. They did not argue about it, but found water and were baptized. It was that simple!

Since water baptism is a meaningful response in obedience to the gospel, it must be done with understanding. We find no Scriptural record of the baptism of infants. Baptism was reserved for adults who confessed Jesus as Lord.

And as they went on their way, they came unto a certain water: and the eunuch said, See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God (Acts 8:36, 37).

Home Study: Lesson 16

Name\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. What types in the Old Testament picture New Covenant (Christian) water baptism?

2. What five things about water baptism do we learn from Israel’s passing through the Red Sea?

3. Why did the disciples baptize in the name of Jesus Christ?

4. When should believers be baptized in water?

5. Study the following chart. Be ready to discuss the importance of water baptism to the New Testament Church.

Water Baptism In The Book Of Acts

Scripture

Agent

Object

Location

Time

Acts 2:37–41

Peter and disciples

3,000 believers

Jerusalem

Immediately at the time of repentance and faith.

Acts 8:12

Philip, the evangelist

all who believed

Samaria

Immediately at the time of repentance and faith.

Acts 8:36–39

Philip, the evangelist

Ethiopian eunuch

desert of Gaza

Immediately at the time of repentance and faith.

Acts 9:18

Ananias, a disciple

Saul of Tarsus

Damascus

After his healing and receiving the Holy Spirit, but as part of his initiation into Christ.

Acts 10:44–48

Peter and certain brethren

House of Cornelius (Gentiles)

home in Caesarea

After receiving the Holy Spirit, but as a part of initiation into Christ the same day.

Acts 16:14, 15

Paul, the apostle

Lydia and other women

Thyatira

Immediately at the time of repentance and faith.

Acts 16:32–34

Paul and Silas

Philippian jailer and household

Philippi

The same hour as repentance and faith.

Acts 18:8

Paul

Crispus and many others

Corinth

Immediately at the time of repentance and faith.

Acts 19:1–7

Paul

12 disciples of John the Baptist

Ephesus

After they were instructed “more perfectly.”