

The Gospel of the Kingdom Repent and Be Baptised Part 2

Studio Session 109

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So in I Peter chapter 3 at verse 21 it says, "The like symbol where unto baptism does now save you." In this series on the gospel of the kingdom, I've addressed a number of religious errors associated with winning someone to Christ, bringing someone to Christ. I've addressed the thought that we are sent to tell people if they repent of their sins, God will forgive them and they'll get to go to heaven. And I've shown that what we're sent to tell people is if they repent from being under the control of the god of this world kingdom and his kingdom and apply for citizenship in the kingdom of God, then know this; that their sins are forgiven. Because we have been made to be ambassadors of the kingdom of God and therefore are duly constituted and appointed to be able to do that.

Now this passage that says, "Repent and be baptized," or that says, "The like figure where unto baptism does now save us," is a passage of scripture that's widely used by those who believe that water baptism is a necessity in order to experience salvation. Once you take the broad picture, that we're saved by being put from one kingdom into another, then the question arises and by the way, once you are in the kingdom of God, you're also in the kingdom of heaven. That means you're part of the eternal in time. Your life has already shifted from being in the natural to being in the Spirit. Whoever lives in the Spirit cannot die because the thing that is emphasized in the Spirit is your spirit. Everyone knows that the body was constructed to house your spirit. When the bible speaks of a person who lives in Christ and believes in Him never dying, the bible is not saying that your body will not die. Your body is simply WHERE you are, your location in time; your body is not WHO you are, it's not even part of who you are, its your housing and God permits it to be so.

The thing that is saved, therefore, is not your body; this flesh will see corruption, this flesh will disappear. The thing that will be raised at the last day is a new body, not in any fashion like this one. So theres nothing about this house we wear that is designed to survive. One of the fundamental errors is the failure of perception. You see, God has translated us, our spirits are entrapped by reason of sin, the sin of our souls entrap our souls and spirits under the control of the evil one. So what God created us to be, in that condition, we could never become. So God liberates us, paid the price, the Son of God was born to do exactly this: To destroy the authority that established disorder between God and man and to destroy the works of the devil and to set you into the kingdom of God.

That being so, water baptism does not place you into the kingdom of God. You're placed in the kingdom of God by the King. The King's delegate is the Holy Spirit, it's the Holy Spirit who assembles you into the body of Christ. This is I Corinthians chapter 12 verse 15. The Spirit connects you, places you in your proper assemblage in the body of Christ. The point of water baptism, of course, the signification of it; is it's a figure, it's a symbol. And it's like other symbols used in the scriptures also involving water. At the time these symbols did not so clearly indicate baptism but later the scriptures would use them to indicate baptism. From I Corinthians chapter 10, the symbol of baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea. And here in I Peter 3, the symbol is that of Noah and the people of his day, the 8 who were saved in the ark. So it's a symbol, water baptism is not the thing itself, no more than the flood was the thing itself, or the red sea was the thing itself; they symbolize something.

What is it then that water baptism symbolizes? And for those who so desire to use water baptism as a condition for your salvation, this should be a specifically important message. What is it that water baptism symbolizes, what is the reality that it symbolizes? Well let's start with Jesus Himself who was baptized. When Jesus came to John to be baptized John said to Him, "I have need to be baptized of You and yet You are coming to me to be baptized?" And Jesus said, "Allow it to be so now for it becomes us to fulfill all of the requirements of righteousness," and John baptized Him.

Why did Jesus come to John, who was John that Jesus would come to him, other than an itinerant preacher? Well John, you see, had just declared that Jesus was the Lamb, "Behold the Lamb of God," he had said as Jesus appeared, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." Hmm. Who was John to declare that Jesus was the Lamb? Well John's father was Zachariah, and Zachariah was a priest, and a priest who offered the sacrifices in the temple. He was a Levitical priest who was qualified to offer the sacrifices in the temple. John was naturally qualified just by being born of Elizabeth and Zachariah, he was naturally qualified to be a priest under the law. The only way he would not be a priest under the law, would be if for some physical deformity or some impurity of life he would have disqualified himself. Well otherwise he was fully qualified and we know that John was not morally impure. Why? Because he had taken a vow of the Nazarite, which was almost like the second cut above voluntarily setting himself apart as a man who was ritualistically pure, under the law.

So he was fully qualified to offer the sacrifice under the law and he had just declared that Jesus was the Lamb. Not a coincidence is it, because what do priests do? They offer sacrifices. What kind of sacrifices? The principle sacrifice that a priest offered under the law was the sacrifice of a lamb. And for the first time in human history a Lamb was not a lamb, but a Man. When Jesus went to John, He went to a Levitical priest. Why would you go to a priest? There were three specific duties that a priest performed. The first is: the priest was to examine the sacrifice to be offered to make sure that it was a perfect sacrifice; without spot, wrinkle, or blemish. And when John says of Jesus, seeing Him come to him that day and John said, "Behold the Lamb of God who takes away the sins of the world." John was declaring this in his official function as a Levitical priest. He was doing the first thing that the priest was required to do under the law and that was to pass judgment on the suitability of the sacrifice to be offered as a sacrifice. He had declared, in that statement, that Jesus was perfect and

therefore was capable of taking away the sins of the world.

Having done so, and Jesus being fully cognizant of him doing that, Jesus said to him, "Wash Me." And John said, "I have need to be washed of You, baptize me." and Jesus said, "Allow it to be so now because it becomes us." Who are the 'us' involved here? Well there's John, for one, and there's Jesus; Jesus and John are having this conversation. And Jesus says to John, "It becomes you and it becomes Me, it becomes us to fulfill the requirements of righteousness." What was Jesus talking about, what requirements of righteousness? Under the law, the other two things the priest was required to do upon pronouncing the sacrifice suitable to be offered, the other two things were: He was to put his hand on the head of the sacrifice and impart the sins of the people to the sacrifice and then he was to wash the sacrifice so that it could be offered. And that's what Jesus was saying to John. "I'm coming to offer this sacrifice under the law that is in place. You are the priest, the administrator of this covenant, I am the sacrifice required by this covenant. You have judged Me that I am qualified to be sacrificed. I am without spot, wrinkle, or blemish, now it is necessary for you to fulfill the other requirements of the law."

The reason that Jesus was baptized by immersion was you had to put the hand on the head in order to immerse someone. And the purpose of even doing that was to symbolize the putting of the sins of the world upon the sacrifice. And so John put his hand on His head, imparted the sins of the world, and then washed Him. When Jesus came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord descended on Him in the form of a dove and showed that God had accepted the sacrifice. Well what did He say when the Spirit descended on Him in the form of a dove? A Voice was heard out of the cloud, what did the Voice say? "This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased, listen to Him." God had declared that the sacrifice was worthy and therefore would take away the sins of the world.

Why was Jesus then baptized? He was the sacrifice. He was washed so that He could be sacrificed. But someone might say, "But this is Jesus, He is in a class by Himself. Even if I grant you that He was washed so that He could be sacrificed, as the sacrificial Lamb, that's never going to be true of any of us. So He is in a class by Himself, we are water baptized so that we can be saved." Oh really, a class by Himself? What about the scripture that says, "I beseech you therefore brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies living sacrifices holy acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, then you'll be able to test and to approve the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God."

We are no less sacrifices than Jesus was, He was sacrificed for us, we are sacrificed for others. The life we now live, we live by faith in the Son of God. Why? Because we are new creations, we are new creations in Christ Jesus. And just as we were able to offer Him, He was our sacrifice to God and God accepted Him and granted us standing with God. In the same way, He sacrifices us so that others might come to know Christ through us, and it's not unreasonable. But don't you remember that we were once children of wrath, we were once under the domain of Satan, we were once sinners.

How does a sinner become an acceptable sacrifice? "I beseech you therefore brethren by the

mercies of God, that you present your bodies living sacrifices." Romans 12:1. How does a sinner, formerly a sinner, come to be a reasonable sacrifice presented to God and that being reasonable? Well that's what baptism does for us. Baptism washes us so that we can be offered as sacrifices to God. Prior to baptism, we become qualified to be offered by choosing to die, to endure death, meaning, choosing to give up our right to govern our lives the way we want to. And to submit ourselves to death. The scriptures say, "He who is dead is freed from sin." Now we would have no useful purpose if we died and remained dead. For us to have a useful purpose we must be resurrected. While we're in that state of having died to the old man of sin, to the adamic nature, the nature of Adam in us; in that condition we are visited by the Spirit of God. And the Spirit of God, who is a life giving Spirit gives us life. What comes forth, in that moment, is meant to be, and is, a partaker of a divine nature.

We now arise to walk in the newness of life and as a new creation we are of the same species as the Lamb who was slain for the sins of the world. And therefore, we are qualified ambassadors through whom others may see the grace of God, which was perfected in Christ and revealed through us to them. So no, we are not the sacrifice that died for the sins of the world but our lives are sacrificed, that this salvation that has been purchased for all might be made known to all so that whoever wills might come.

We are the second stage in the process. The first stage was the salvation of all. That is, whoever might be saved, might be saved because Jesus accomplished on the cross that reality. That Jesus died on the cross so that everyone might be saved who would choose to avail themselves of His salvation, that's what I mean by the salvation of all. I'm not talking about this doctrine of universal salvation, that's not only wrong, it's another whole story. But Jesus died on the cross and the death of Jesus on the cross was sufficient to save everyone. You must choose to be saved, of course, in order to avail yourself of such a great salvation.

But that message, that which was done on the cross, now becomes the message of the kingdom, that our Champion has defeated the evil one and whoever was under his control can now be freed by simply walking away and coming into the kingdom, coming for refuge, coming to the kingdom as refugees from the kingdom of darkness. We also, by baptism, are washed; so that we may be sacrificed for the well being of others. Why? Because in this order of priests, in this order of the kingdom, the kingdom is ruled by priests; for we are a kingdom of priests, and a holy nation. I have it under the authority of Peter who says, "For you are a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for God's own possession." God Himself lives in you, and by His Spirit God Himself moves you. You are the administrators of the covenant that provides mankind, born in Adam, to become the sons of God.

The priest of this covenant, unlike the priest of the Old Testament, do not offer an animal as a sacrifice; the priests of this covenant are themselves the sacrifice, they offer themselves as the sacrifice. And they're washed to show that the evil one has no control over them and they are free now to give themselves into the purposes of God. Here is what is said in the book of Romans, let me just read a few passages beginning at chapter 6. Romans 6:1 says, "So what shall we say then, shall we go on sinning that grace may abound? By no means! We died to sin how can we live any longer in it or don't you know that all of you who were baptized into Jesus Christ were baptized into His death. We are therefore buried with Him through baptism

into death. In order that just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also should walk in the newness of life. If we have been united with Him in the likeness of His death, then we shall certainly be united with Him in the likeness of His resurrection. For we know that our old selves were crucified with Him so that the body of sin might be done away with that we should no longer be slaves to sin because anyone who has died has become freed from sin." That's why you're required to die so that you might be adopted as the sons of God.

Then it goes on to say, Romans 8:1, "There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit of life has set me free from the law of sin and death," and then it goes on to say, "Those who live according to the sinful nature have set their minds on what the sinful nature desires. Corresponding, you who are not controlled by the sinful nature but by the Spirit, if the Spirit of God lives in you, are controlled by the Spirit and if anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ he does not belong to God." Romans 8 at verse 12 says, "Brothers you now have an obligation, therefore, but it is not to the sinful nature, to live according to it, for if you live according to the sinful nature you will die but if by the Spirit you put to death the misdeeds of the body you will live." And then going on and culminating in Romans 12, "Therefore I urge you brothers, in view of Gods mercies, to offer your bodies living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not be conformed any longer to the pattern of this world but be transformed by the renewing of your mind then you'll be able to test and to approve the good, pleasing, and perfect will of God."

So water baptism is a symbol, it's a symbol according to Paul in his letter to Titus, Titus 3:5; it is a symbol of quote "the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost." It's not by works of righteousness which we've done but according to His mercy He saved us by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. Water baptism, then is a symbol, it is not the reality, it's a symbol. The reality is that you've been released from the kingdom of darkness and you're now a citizen in the kingdom of God. As a citizen in the kingdom you're also a son, an ambassador, someone who is a living sacrifice someone whose life might be poured out for the benefit of others as Jesus' life was poured out for your benefit. You become a testament and a witness of the grace of God. That's the reality.

Water baptism, like the baptism to Noah, like the baptism to Moses, symbolizes your release from the control of the god of this world. Are you released from the control of the god of this world BEFORE you are water baptized? Of course, of course you are. Water baptism is the day that you set it in stone. Do you celebrate the Lords resurrection from the dead if you do not participate in the Lords supper? Of course you do, when you celebrate the resurrection through the participation in the Lords supper you set the matter forth in stone. And your enemy can never drag you back over that threshold again; you know and you have declared it to him that you have been set free and he cannot take you again as a slave to fear. This is the liberation that comes to you with the preaching of the gospel of the kingdom.

I'm Sam Soleyn, God bless you. I'll see you again. Bye, bye.