

Meaning of Baptism

With the grace of God you have direct connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ

Fred R. Coulter—January 19, 2019

Greetings, brethren! Welcome to Sabbath services! We had a wonderful baptism this morning, so let's look at what baptism means, and why you have to be completely under the water. That also helps answer why infant baptism is meaningless!

How much does an infant know? The whole purpose of baptism is after you repent of sin, the infant has done nothing! Let's look at it. It's very simple thing, but with a profound meaning. The Bible shows that whenever there is a covenant that is made, those who make the covenant must bring forth a sacrifice.

In the time when there were animal sacrifices, the animal was cut down the middle, laid both parts apart making a path so the one making the covenant could walk through. That's what we find with God and Abraham (Gen. 15), which comes clear to our day. That was not burned; it was not put on the altar. It was laid on the ground. The reason that was that way was because the one walking between the animals was pledging to his honor that he would fulfill the terms of the covenant or he would be like that animal.

We know that Jesus gave His life as a sacrifice. That's His part. We'll cover that leading up to the Passover. That was a very difficult thing indeed! When you consider how He was scourged and everything that He went through before He died, He died for the sin of the world.

A lot of people ask why did not John the Baptist say, 'Behold the Lamb of God Who died for the sins of the world'? *Because there's one sin that we all have that came from Adam and eve because of their sin, and that's human nature!*

Human nature is sinful and needs to be change, or converted, *with God's Spirit!* So, when God calls someone, and they're drawn to the knowledge of the Truth, they begin to understand the Word of God, and they know that they have to be baptize, then they need to also understand that it's the shed blood of Christ that pays for their sins, *and that's His sacrifice!*

What is the sacrifice of those who want to be baptized and have their sins forgiven, receive the Holy Spirit of God and walk in the way of God? *Their sacrifice is baptism!*

It's a very short and very simple, but the truth is that if you weren't raised out of the water you would die. But God doesn't want you to die physically, at this point, *He wants you to bury the*

old nature! That's in summary the whole reason for baptism!

Romans 6:1: "What then shall we say? Shall we continue in sin so that grace may abound?" *Sin is the transgression of the Law!* So, if you have the Ten Commandments and you look at them and you say that you're not to sin anymore. That's means you're to keep the Ten Commandments, plus whatever Jesus shows what we are to do.

Verse 2: "MAY IT NEVER BE! We who died to sin... [when you're buried in the watery grave of baptism, you are **dying** to sin] ...how shall we live any longer therein? Or are you ignorant that we, as many as were baptized into Christ Jesus, **were baptized into His death?**" (vs 2-3). **What happens?** *This is a spiritual thing that God applies!*

Verse 4: "Therefore, we were buried with Him through the baptism into **the death...**" *That's what it is in the Greek. What is the death? Jesus' death!*

"...so that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, in the same way, we also should walk in newness of life.... [living the way that God wants us to live] ...**For if we have been conjoined together in the likeness of His death...**" (vs 4-5). *That sentence is very important!*

Conjoined means you have been bound to the death of Christ with your baptism! That is your sacrifice, so there are two sacrifices for the covenant:

1. from God through Christ
2. from you through Christ

Together the death of Christ—conjoined!

"...so also shall we be in the likeness of **His resurrection.** Knowing this, that our old man was co-crucified with Him... [through baptism] ...**in order that the body of sin might be destroyed...**" (vs 4-5).

Now, that's an interesting way to phrase it, because we still have human nature, but we have to overcome it. "...might be destroyed..." *step-by-step as you overcome sin and grow in grace and knowledge, and eventually die and are resurrected!* So, it's quite an operation that God has! Really very profound!

"...so that we might no longer be enslaved to sin; because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin" (vs 6-7)—*meaning your sins have been wiped away!*

To be under grace means this, and this is one of the things that is so difficult for some people to understand. ***Having the grace of God you have direct connection with God the Father and Jesus Christ:***

- through prayer
- through the Word of God
- through living and waling in God's way

Let's look at something that is really quite astounding. Protestants think that they need to get out and get everybody saved, and if you're not saved you're going to burn in hell forever. What if you were never called?

Let's see what Jesus said when the disciples wanted to know when He spoke to the crowds in parables:

Matthew 13:11: "And He answered *and said* to them, 'Because it has been given to you to know the mysteries of the Kingdom of Heaven, but to them it has not been given.'" ***It is God Who opens your mind! Stop and think"***

- What caused you to really want to know about God?
- How did that happen?
- Where was your life at? What were you doing?
- How did it happen that one day BING! you wanted to find out about God?

For some people they just leave that alone, but for other people who are being called

- Why did you want to know more about God?

Michael has had a life searching, all his life. Now that he knows the Truth, he knows that it came from God, *because it is God Who calls! The only way you understand the Bible is that it is given by God!* Why?

Verse 12: "For whoever has *understanding*, to him more shall be given... [that's growing in grace and knowledge] ...and he shall have an abundance, but whoever does not have *understanding*, even what he has shall be taken away from him. For this *reason* I speak to them in parables, because seeing, they see not; and hearing, they hear not neither do they understand" (vs 12-13).

When you hear the Word of God, you want to do it, you want to know more about it, you want to know how prophecies fit together and things like this. People in the world don't care!

Verse 14: "And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Isaiah, which says, 'In hearing you shall hear, and in no way understand; and *in* seeing you

shall see, and in no way perceive.'" *That's what most people are like with the Bible!*

If you have a friend of yours who wants to understand the Bible and wants to know about it, if you just handed him the Bible and said, 'Here, read it,' he wouldn't understand. Especially if you open the book of Isaiah; that's quite a book to understand! So, you start with the simple things: Love God and keep His commandments, ***and the key***—after the understanding has been opened—***to progress is the Sabbath Day!***

Verse 15: "For the heart of this people has grown fat, and their ears are dull of hearing, and ***their eyes they have closed***... [they don't want to know] ...lest they should see with their eyes, and should hear with their ears, and should understand with their hearts, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Jesus is saying that He doesn't want everybody converted at this time. That's why it says that it's the few who are chosen. *Why many are called, but few are chosen!* That's the reason. So, when you come to baptism and receive the Spirit of God, and have your sins forgiven, you are in a different position with God than you were before. He has given you His Holy Spirit!

I will explain the dramatic difference. All the Protestants say that if you keep the ***commandments, 'you're tying to earn your salvation.'*** ***Not true!*** They also say that 'you are under law if you keep the commandments.' ***Not true!***

- Who is under law?
- What does that mean?

Romans 7:1: Are you ignorant, brethren (for I am speaking to those ***who know law***) ***that the Law [... the laws of God] ...rules over a man for as long a time as he may live?"***

If the Law is over you, you are under law. What does the Law do? even if you don't know it? Look at the people who lie, cheat and steal. Add to that those who kill and commit sexual immorality of all kinds. Have you ever see these prison programs where they talk to the hardened criminals that have killed? *They say that if you let them out they will do it again!* They are under law!

How does that change when you're converted, but still keeping the commandments of God? *The one under law is **not** keeping the commandments!*

- What did Jesus say was the obligation of every human being toward God?
- What did Jesus say when He was tempted

by Satan the devil?

- *Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word of God!*
- Did He say the converted?
- *No! He said **man**, that's every human being in general!*
- Are human being in general subject to the Law of God regardless of where they are?
- *Yes, they are! Just like the law of gravity!*

Romans 3:19: "Now then, we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law..." Paul wrote that *the Law is over a man as long a time as he may live!*

"...so that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God" (v 19). Why? *Because of sin!*

What happens when you're converted? *There becomes an absolute spiritual change in your mind!* All human beings have *the spirit of man* so that they may have life. But when there's repentance and baptism and the receiving of the Holy Spirit there is a change. *God gives the Holy Spirit because that's what you need to overcome sin!*

What we're going to read in John 14 are some of the greatest verses in the entire Bible. It shows:

- the love God
- the power of God
- what God wants us to do

Notice that all of the *ifs* apply to human beings. They don't apply to God, they apply to human beings!

John 14:15: "**If** you love Me, keep the commandments—namely, My commandments." *That's quite a profound statement when you understand Who Jesus was before He became a man!* He was the One Who gave the Ten Commandments at Mt. Sinai. So, you include those commandments. Remember, Jesus said in the most dogmatic fashion that *the Law will never be abolished!*

What else did He say about His words? *Heaven—that's pretty big place out there—and earth may perish, but 'My words shall never perish'!* How important are the commandments of Jesus? *All the commandments of God in the Bible came through Jesus!*

Verse 16: "And I will ask the Father, and He shall give you another Comforter, that it may be with you throughout the age: **Even the Spirit of the Truth**..." (vs 16-17).

That's one thing that with the Spirit of God

in you, you will desire the Truth, *the Truth* and **nothing but the Truth!** No politics! No miss! No lies! No traditions!

"...which the world cannot receive because it perceives it not, nor knows it; but you know it because it dwells with you, and shall be **within** you" (v 17). ***That is conversion!*** *A spiritual impact of God's Spirit in your life!*

Verse 18: "I will not leave you orphans; I will come to you. Yet, a little while and the world shall see Me no longer; but you shall see Me. Because I live, you shall live, also. In that day, you shall know that I am in My Father, and you are in Me, and I am in you" (vs 18-20). *This is the whole truth of why baptism is such a covenant sacrifice!*

Verse 21: "**The one who has My commandments and is keeping them...** [in the Greek this is a participle meaning continuously doing] **...that is the one who loves Me, and the one who loves Me shall be loved by My Father, and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.**"

If Jesus is going to be in heaven, how is He going to manifest Himself to you? ***By giving you the desire and the understanding for the Truth!***

Verse 22: "Judas (not Iscariot) said to him, 'Lord, **what has happened that You are about to manifest Yourself to us, and not to the world?**' Jesus answered and said to him, 'If anyone loves Me, he will keep My Word... [all the Word of God] ...and My Father will love him, and **We**...'" (vs 22-23)—*the Father and the Son*; so the receiving of the Holy Spirit has two aspects as it shows in the Bible:

1. the begetting from the Father to become a spiritual son or daughter of God
2. the Spirit of Christ so that you develop the mind of Christ, which is conversion

That's what it is!

"...and We will come to him and make Our abode with him" (v 23). *Stop and think about that!* How great that is! Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, and the Father Who sent Him, and the power of the Holy Spirit from Them, ***to unite with the spirit of our mind*** so that we become spiritually-minded. That's the whole purpose of everything.

Verse 24: "The one who **does not love Me**... [What's the qualifier in v 15? "**If you love me, keep My commandments...**"] **...does not keep My words;** and the Word that you hear is not Mine, but the Father's, Who sent Me."

Hebrew 10:4: "Because *it is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins.*"

What is the difference between forgiveness

in the Old Testament and forgiveness in the New Testament?

- In the O.T. you were forgiven *for the act*, but it didn't change the mind!
- In the N.T. you are forgiven for this sins *in the mind!*

Those are the ones to be overcome! That's why you have the Spirit of the Father *and* the Son together! That's quite a fantastic blessing!

Verse 5: "For this reason, when He comes into the world, He says, 'Sacrifice and offering You did not desire, but You have prepared a body for Me. You did not delight in burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin'" (vs 5-6). Why? *Because it could never forgive the sin within!* It can forgive the action.

Example: Suppose that someone committed second degree homicide and was sent to prison and paid his time. After staying however many years he was justified because he was no longer considered a criminal. If it was bad enough he would probably have to be on probation, so that's kind of halfway out.

But was His mind converted? *No!* He probably thought, while in jail, if he had done this or that he wouldn't have gotten caught. If you don't think you're going to get caught, watch forensic files sometime.

We were watching one and they got this guy 24 years later by paint in a vacuum cleaner that never got emptied when the crime took place. Think of that! If men can do that:

- What does God know about our heart and mind?
- What does it say of the carnal mind? *Enmity against God, isn't subject to the Law of God, neither indeed can be!*

So, this is why baptism, commandment-keeping, God's Spirit and growing and overcoming all come together in one great and fantastic package.

Verse 7: "Then said I [Jesus], 'Lo, I come (as it is written of Me in the Scroll of the Book) to do Your will, O God.'" In the saying above, *He said*, 'Sacrifice and offering and burnt offerings and *sacrifices* for sin (which are offered according to the priestly law) You did not desire nor delight in.' Then He said, 'Lo, I come to do Your will, O God.'.... [that's the example of Jesus] ...He takes away the first *covenant* in order that He may establish the second *covenant*; by Whose will we are sanctified through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ **once for all**" (vs 7-10).

If you know the Holy Days—and even if you don't know them, you can learn from the Holy

Days—that God in His plan is going to take care of all of those whom He didn't call. If you want to know how that is, stick around for the Holy Days and you'll know. But it's a fantastic thing! ***The greatest thing that's going to happen on this physical earth! It's going to be absolutely marvelous!***

Verse 11: "Now, every high priest stands ministering day by day, offering the same sacrifices repeatedly..."

What did they have everyday? *Morning sacrifice and evening sacrifice!* And other sacrifices during the day, and special sacrifices on the Holy Days.

"...which are never able to remove sins" (v 11)—***from the mind/heart!*** That's what's important and that's the difference.

Verse 12: "But He [Jesus], after offering one sacrifice for sins forever, sat down at *the* right hand of God. Since that time, He is waiting until His enemies are placed *as* a footstool for His feet. For by one offering He has obtained eternal perfection *for* those who are sanctified. And the Holy Spirit also bears witness to us; for after He had previously said, "This *is* the covenant that I will establish with them after those days," says *the* Lord... [this is the New Covenant] ..."**I will give My Laws...**" (vs 12-16).

God gives! How? *Through His Spirit, which is the Spirit of Truth to help!* What do you need to overcome a deceitful mind? *Truth!* God's way is really simple! ***The way you overcome a deceitful mind is the Truth of God's Spirit to give you the power to control your own thoughts!***

"...I will give My Laws into their hearts, and I will inscribe them in their minds; and **their sins and lawlessness I will not remember ever again**" (vs 16-17). *That's why we are under grace!*

Because we have the Spirit of God, and as we study, grow and overcome writing in our mind His laws and so forth. You're never going to have the written there unless you study the Bible. *It's that simple!*

Look at all of us today, we use the exact same alphabet that we learned in kindergarten or pre-school. You probably remember the ABC song. But with that spiritually, with the Spirit of God, we understand *spiritual things!* It is the mind that needs to be cleansed.

Romans 6:7: "Because the one who has died *to sin* has been justified from sin." *When you are baptized you die to sin!*

What does that mean? *You don't let sin rule!* There's a difference between sinning and having sin rule in your heart and mind.

Verse 8: “Now, if we died together with Christ, we believe that we shall also live with Him, knowing that Christ, having been raised from *the* dead, dies no more; **death no longer has any dominion over Him**. For when He died, He died unto sin once for all; but in that He lives, He lives unto God” (vs 8-10).

This shows us what we are to do, v 11: “In the same way also, you should indeed reckon yourselves **to be dead to sin...**”—*the sin within, not just the actions you do!*

Remember what Jesus said about murder? *You’ve heard in ancient times that he who murders comes to judgment, but I say to, he who hates his brother is sinning in the mind!*

“...but alive to God through Christ Jesus our Lord. **Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof**” (vs 11-12).

Why? *Because when you receive the Holy Spirit of God, that is called the circumcision of the heart!* That removes the hostility of the carnal mind toward the laws and commandments of God, and His Spirit and love—*all of that together!*

Verse 13: Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin...” **How do you do that?** *If something comes along that is moving you toward sin, you stop it!* That’s exactly what it means there.

“...rather, **yield yourselves to God** as those who are alive from *the* dead... [because you’re raised out of the water, you’re alive] ...and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God.... [if you do that, with God’s Spirit] ...For sin shall not rule over you because **you are not under law, but under grace.**” (vs 13-14).

If the law is over you and you don’t have the Spirit of God, and you’re motivated by sin, and your carnal mind is sin, ***then sin is ruling you!*** But **IF** with the Spirit of God you’re overcoming, and putting down sin rather than letting it grow and develop and become a hateful miserable thing, that’s the difference.

Verse 12: “Therefore, do not let sin rule in your mortal body by obeying it in the lusts thereof. Likewise, do not yield your members as instruments of unrighteousness to sin; rather, yield yourselves to God as those who are alive from *the* dead, and your members *as* instruments of righteousness to God. For **sin shall not rule over you because you are not under law**” (vs 12-14).

People who are carnal are all under law. They sin knowingly! Some enjoy a lot of it, however it may be. There’s no way that they can quit sinning *unless they repent!*

After repentance and receiving the Holy Spirit of God, God’s Spirit is going to prick your conscience that you have done wrong, ***so you repent!***

That is the grace that you have directly from God the Father and Jesus Christ! Here we are all on the Sabbath obeying and keeping the Sabbath. No one can say that we’re breaking the Sabbath, because we’re here and studying the Word of God. We’re learning what God wants us to know. That’s the way it should be every Sabbath.

Verse 15: What then? Shall we sin because we are not under law, but under grace? **MAY IT NEVER BE!**”

Then Paul goes on to show that if you obey sin, you’re a slave to sin! That’s what happens in the world. How many New Year’s resolutions have people given? *and* What would it consist of? Within how long? *Oh well, I couldn’t do it!*

Now, with the Spirit of God can you overcome sin? *Yes!* With the Sabbath, look what happens on the Sabbath Day out in the world: shopping, sales, sports, all kinds of things beginning Friday night, and that’s when most teenagers get into trouble. You were a teenager once:

- What were you doing on Friday night?
- How did that happen?
- How did you get caught up in it?
- How did you escape it?

God calls us! That’s how all of that works.

Then it goes on the show that we have to fight against sin, grow in grace and knowledge and overcome! ***That’s the meaning of baptism!***

Scriptural References:

- 1) Romans 6:1-7
- 2) Matthew 13:11-15
- 3) Romans 7:1
- 4) Romans 3:19
- 5) John 14:15-24
- 6) Hebrews 10:4-17
- 7) Romans 6:7-15

Scripture referenced, not quoted: Genesis 15

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